Oda Nobuna no Yabou Volume4

source : https://www.baka-tsuki.org/project/index.php?title=Oda_Nobuna_no_Yabou:Volume4

織田信奈の野望

4

春日みかげ　イラスト：みやま零

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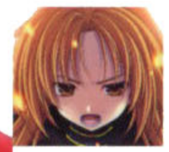

春日みかげ

GA文庫

ISBN978-4-7973-6123-0

C0193 ¥620E

9784797361230

1920193006209

定価　本体620円　+税

ジーエー文庫
発行：ソフトバンク クリエイティブ

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突然、戦国時代に飛び込んでしまった高校生の相良良晴。史実とは微妙に違うその世界で、姫大名の織田信奈に仕官した良晴は、戦国ゲームで得た知識を駆使して内政や軍事で頭角をあらわしていく。

多くの合戦を経て、上洛にも成功して勢いに乗る織田家――。だが、越前の朝倉義景を攻めに出陣した織田信奈とその軍勢は、同盟関係にあったはずの浅井家の裏切りにより窮地に立たされる。

この大ピンチに際して、自らしんがりに名乗りを上げた良晴には過酷な運命が待ち受ける。そして、逃走する信奈にも魔の手が!?

天下布武ラブコメディ第四弾、堂々の登場！

井戸のもとへと駆け寄り、ねねは水垢離をはじめた。
槍を持って戦場へ行きたい。
でも、幼いねねにとって、それは無理というものだった。

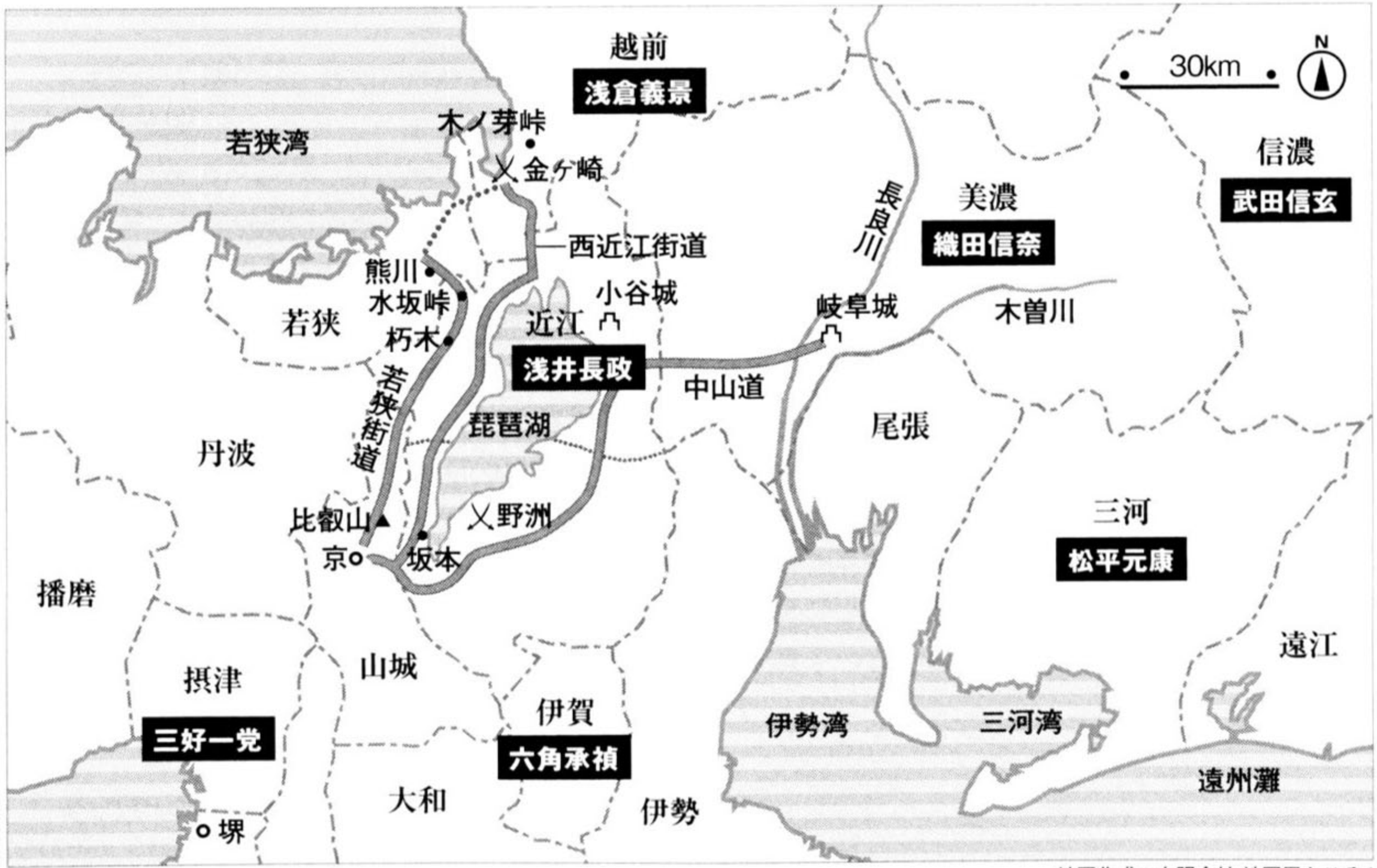
柴田勝家

丹羽長秀

明智光秀

松永久秀

MAP



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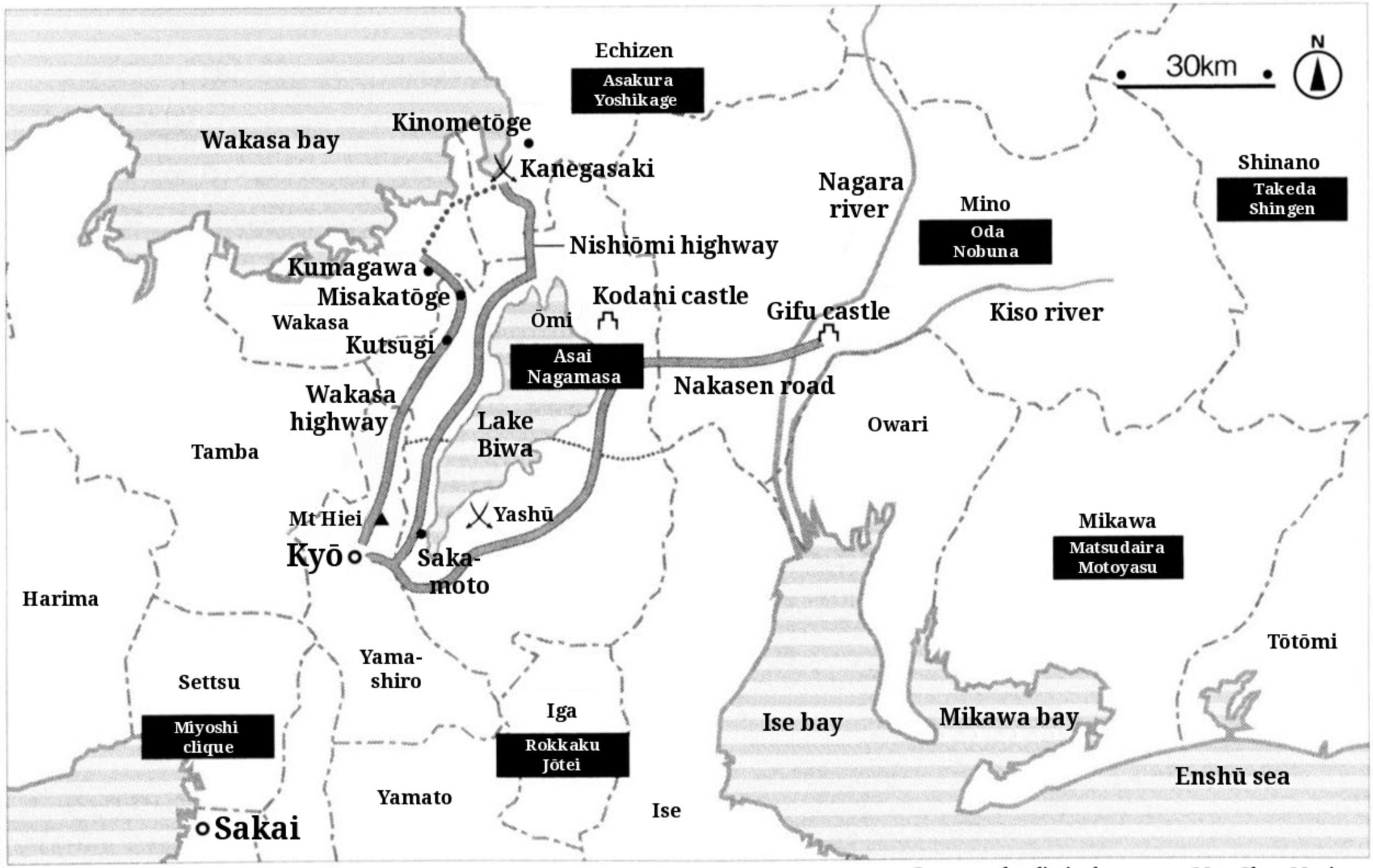

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Chapter 1 : Sniping of Nobuna

Part 1

In north-eastern Japan, one could find Yonezawa Castle in Dewa Province.

This was the main castle of Date Terumune of Oshu.

At a corner of Yonezawa Castle, connected with tons of rainforests, a black namban church had been erected.

If one looked closely, they would see an upside down cross on the roof.

Inside this namban church that seemed more useful for worshiping an antichrist than the namban god, a young girl had been shouting in a high-pitched voice since daybreak.

"Kojuurou~~!"

This was the voice of Bontenmaru, Date Masamune, Date Terumune's eldest daughter, calling her aide, Kojuurou. No matter how far apart they were, Kojuurou would always be able to hear Bontenmaru's voice.

"Yes~~! Hime-sama, what is it that you wish this early in the morning?"

Katakura Kojuurou; at 15 years of age, she was a girl born from a distinguished chief advisor.

The day Bontenmaru was born, Kojuurou was tasked with protecting her, and from then on she had acted as an aide and caretaker for the young and willful Bontenmaru. Before she knew it, her marriage age had almost passed her by completely.

Anyway, when Kojuurou arrived at the Antichrist church, she found Bontenmaru, who was supposed to tour around Sakai, wearing a black feathered namban hat , standing on top of the altar with her arms crossed.

"Uwahahahaha, Kojuurou! I've decided that from this point on, I will be the conqueror of Oshu!"

"Wh-what are you saying, Hime? Don't tell me you were affected by that ridiculous namban culture... The daimyos in Oshu all have those complicated marriage relationships, so they won't be serious in fighting among themselves, will they?"

"You don't understand! Before I become the ‘Beast of Revelation’, I must first destroy this old way of thinking! Uwahahahaha! If I don't hurry and become the conqueror of Oshu, I will be surpassed by Oda Nobuna who has already captured Kyo!"

"Kyo...Kyoto is too far, that is a place that we...we Oshu people have no relation to, a completely different world..."

"Shut up, Kojuurou, don't say things like this anymore! Oda Nobuna is becoming stronger and stronger! She has already started to attack the Soma clan! If enemies won't listen to ‘the Beast’, they must be eliminated!"

Ahhhh~? The cowardly Kojuurou let out a small shriek.

"Don't tell me you were affected by Oda Nobuna at Sakai, Hime-sama? Don't become such a terrifying

person! There will be enemies everywhere around you! Besides, you aren't the head of the Date clan, Hime~! Your father Terumune is the head~!"

"Hmph... It's unavoidable. Listen, Kojuurou, I can't wait until I come of age. Because I have gained such an ambition, I want father to live a relaxing, retired life."

"Ahhh~? Hime-sama is still too young~ You can't do it ~!?"

"There is no better choice for father than to give the position of head to this 'Beast of Revelation'! Ahh, how agonizing the path to the journey of a conqueror is for me... But I'm willing to bravely travel this path of hell! Like Jesus who bore the heavy cross on his back and climbed impossible peaks! But, I must go against Jesus~! Because I'm the 'Antichrist' that the book of Revelation has predicted! Hahahaha!"

After such a fiery speech, Bontenmaru revealed a beastly expression and continued. "We decided before on the extremely cool nickname 'Dokugan Masamune', but now I have no need for it."

"Eh? That is a nickname that Hime-sama and I thought of using after 3 days and nights, referencing the great

Tang's famous one-eyed hero, Li Keyong[1]. I have said before that Hime-sama even looks very similar to Li Keyong when she wears black..."

"Listen to what you're saying Kojuurou, I'm not one-eyed at all. In Sakai, a Saru from the future told me something. I am a hero for the ages, someone who possesses a 'Jakigan'. It was said that in a place of the future named 'Akihabara', these eyes of mine are very popular!"

"Jakigan? Does that mean the color of your eyes are different?"

"Correct!"

Bontenmaru, whose eyes were different colours because her father was namban... Because of the sin between her mother and her namban father, she was punished by the Buddha... The people surrounding her all whispered amongst themselves, and even her mother was stunned, saying "So ugly" and becoming despondent to the point of almost disowning her. Bontenmaru made a request to her father, saying "I want to see a namban church with a real pastor" and was sent to Sakai. The advisors all said, "With this, we can finally do a proper

exorcism." "Isn't it better if we just send her back to the namban?" and just like that, she was half-banished to Sakai. Because of the advisors, her protector Kojuurou was not allowed to accompany her.

But the Bontenmaru who came back from Sakai seemed like a different girl altogether, having gained great confidence and ambition.

But to be the conqueror of Oshu and compete with the world's Oda Nobuna, to Kojuurou it all seems like a story right out of a dream.

"Kojuurou! From now on, I will be the 'Jakigan Masamune'... Ha... Hahahaha... Look on, Oda Nobuna, I will use my Jakigan to conquer Oshu and come at Kyo like a storm! Like the true great demon lord, let us battle to the death!"

"A-ar-are you serious, Hime-sama?"

"Of course! Uwahahahaha!"

"Uhh, you came back with the ambition to unify and return peace to the world, so that's what you meant, Hime? If that's true, then I Kojuurou will do what I can to help!"

"No! My ambition is to destroy this world like a demon! World chaos! To become the foretold ‘Beast of Revelation’ and rampage the lands like in the holy bible! Uwahahahaha!"

"Ahhhh~, Hime, Hime! Though I'm overjoyed that you regained your spirits, what has this Sakai trip change you into~!? What should I do~?"

In this mysterious Antichrist church outside of Yonezawa castle, the sound of sobbing could be heard from the serious Kojuurou.

Part 2

This scenery had never been seen before.

In the middle of the night.

All one could see were mountains... But the scattered sounds of hoes and shovels echoed in the dark.

Hoes? Shovels?

These weren't weapons; they belonged in the hands of commoners.

Why...?

Isn't Onii-sama heading towards Odani Castle?

Sagara Yoshiharu was full of injuries, staggering alone in a battlefield full of tragic screams.

An arrow had even embedded itself in his back.

His thighs and legs were covered in injuries from spears and traps.

He couldn’t even walk straight, and was reduced to hobbling along with the aid of swords and rods...

"Nene... I'm sorry... I can't return to your side anymore. .."

This was his last sentence.

Sagara Yoshiharu suddenly collapsed forward.

His soul was still heading back towards Kyo...

"Onii-sama!?"

Nene woke up violently.

The sight of Yoshiharu on the battlefield disappeared from her eyes like an illusion.

The place Nene had woken swam into focus; a dark room...on a tatami mat.

"...Hu...Hu...Hu... A dream, it's just a dream... Good, good."

This was Kyo's Myōkaku Temple.

Sagara Yoshiharu and his allies had been staying here.

In the room next door, Takenaka Hanbei was lying on a tatami mat, and Hachisuka Goemon and Sagara Yoshiharu have yet to return from Omi.

The Oda Nobuna army had moved out to assault Echizen's Asakura clan. Yoshiharu and Goemon who were tasked to protect Kyo rushed out to Omi, frantically saying "The Asakura and Asai clans are very close; if Asai Nagamasa of Northern Omi betrays Nobuna because of the Asakura clan, then the Oda troops have no way out and will be eliminated."

"Weird... That dream just now, if it's a dream, it was too weird. It's almost as if it was real."

The young Nene had yet to see a real battlefield.

But the vision matched the very real battlefield many miles away; what Nene saw in the dream was real.

It was still deep in the night. The prescription that Takenaka Hanbei got from Manase had taken effect and she was sleeping soundly. Nene did not want to wake her up just to discuss her dream.

"That Onii-sama is like a cockroach who can't die, but don't tell me... Though Onii-sama's skills with the spear, bow, and riding are all ridiculously low, he has always lived on somehow!"

Till now... Hasn't Yoshiharu always returned home with a brilliant smile just for the waiting Nene?

Always bringing local delicacies with him.

During the time at Okehazama or at Sunomata Ichiya castle, or at Kiyomizu... Yoshiharu would somehow win against all odds at the most desperate of times.

He would be safe this time too. Yes, he would be...

She repeated this to herself, but her body wouldn't stop shivering. Once again, she slipped back into her bed and hugged her legs, forcing her eyes closed, but the unease in her heart lingered still.

Part 3

"These are the front troops of Echizen's Asakura Yoshikage!? There are so many of them!"

"Uwahhhh, run, commander~!"

"No matter the amount of enemies~! We must face them straight on!"

"We must let the commander return alive to Hime-sama's side!"

After escaping from Echizen's Kanegasaki castle, Sagara Yoshiharu and these 500 seemingly invincible people were running in the mountains as arrows rained down at them. There was not a soldier among them uninjured.

The Asakura army was attacking them like a flood.

Oda Nobuna, who had helped Imagawa Yoshimoto to attain the position of Shogun, successfully persuaded Himiko to allow her to launch an attack at Echizen's Asakura Yoshikage after he refused to submit himself to the Imagawa Shogunate.

The warriors who had joined in the battle, other than Nobuna herself, were her two chief advisors Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide.

The talented genius, a new girl, Akechi Mitsuhide.

The aide, Maeda Inuchiyo.

And finally, Oda’s ally, Mikawa's Matsudaira Motoyasu.

With all personnel's counted, the total army strength consisted of 30,000 men.

The Echizen clan's total strength was just 20,000. Because of the sudden assault, the Echizen army was defeated in an instant, their lack of preparation proving disastrous.

Nobuna's troops pressed their victory and conquered Kanegasaki Castle before started their advance on Konome Ridge.

The distance from Echizen's main castle to Ichijoudani Castle seemed simply a step away.

But at this time, the god-brother (who was actually a girl) of Nobuna in charge of Northern Omi, Azai Nagamasa defected. Her father Azai Hisamasa, who heavily favored the Azai clan’s long term alliance with the Asakura clan over the newer alliance with the Oda clan, imprisoned Nagamasa and took the position of clan head. With this, the retreat route of Nobuna’s army was cut off, leaving them stranded deep in Echizen territory.

20,000 Asakura troops in front.

15,000 Asai troops at the back.

The Nobuna troops were trapped like a rat.

Nobuna decided to give the difficult order to retreat to Kyo. The one who insisted on stopping the attacks of the Asakura troops and protecting their back was Sagara

Yoshiharu, a high school student who adores Sengoku games, but somehow came to this era from modern Japan .

Finding an Oda Nobuna instead of an Oda Nobunaga, he made it his mission to help her obtain the world. Whether quarreling non-stop with her or helping her, by her side he was called "Saru".

At such a dangerous situation, he could still wear a refreshing smile.

"From my gaming knowledge, this event is the ‘Retreat of Kanegasaki’. If I'm really the guy who replaced Toukichiro-jii-san and came to this world, then I will definitely live and reach Kyo with Nobuna!! Ohohoh?!"

Suddenly, Yoshiharu's headband was hit by a bullet from an arquebus.

"Not good! If that was on target, I would be dead!! Uwahhh!"

"Hohoho, what a careless guy, to be shot dead in the head by a bullet, how boring."

The shikigami Zenki, who was summoned by Takenaka Hanbei, was just an idiot who could only float in the sky right now.

Though he doesn't look quite like a noble, he possessed elegant looks. But he wasn't a human, and a casual look at his head would reveal fox ears occasionally . Shikigamis were such a strange race.

"Such a careless human can win, Zenki. Look, is my face auspicious or what?"

"No, Sagara, your face looks full of women troubles. There will be quite a number of troubles waiting for you in the future."

"Eh? What's that about? There isn't really someone decent in this troop, is there?"

The Matsudaira ninja clothed in black, Hattori Hanzo jumped between trees, his eyes never leaving Yoshiharu.

"Sagara Yoshiharu. Didn't you say that you will survive this ‘Retreat at Kanegasaki’ no matter what? If

we are defeated here, the Oda army won't be able to run! The enemy knows this, and they will attack us as if their lives depend on it."

"You're right Hanzo, we can't stay here because now the main force of the Oda troops has successfully retreated! Letting them reach Kyo safely is our responsibility!"

"There are just 500 of us. If we meet the enemy's main troops, we will be eliminated in an instant."

"Actually, I have 50 arquebus from Juubei. If the Asakura troops chase us, we can teach them a lesson even if we are defeated."

"There are just 50 of them, and we have to concentrate on running, so there is no time to reload them."

The foot soldiers that came from Kyushu's Satsuma Province besides Yoshiharu were all suggesting available strategies to him even as they blocked arrows aiming at Yoshiharu's back. They really were elites.

"In Satsuma's Shimazu clan, there is a technique called 'Sutegamari'[2]."

Even as the force ran, they left small arquebus squads ambushing pursuers, but because reloading required more time than they could spare, rapid firing is impossible. After firing then, the soldiers who had finished shooting would stab their arquebus at the enemy lines and hope for a swift death. Of course, soldiers without an arquebus would just take spears and rush into enemy lines.

If they follow this plan, 500 people would in essence commit suicide against the enemy on this mountain path, though the enemy army’s pursuit would be greatly delayed and Yoshiharu-dono's chances of escaping would increase.

"To protect our commander, we heroes will not hesitate to commit suicide against the enemy. A coward would foil the entire plan, but we Satsuma heroes are united in the Sagara troops, so there is no need for worry. This is the tradition of the Shimazu clan, the ultimate technique, ‘Sutegamari’!"

Even as all 500 of the soldiers were shouting "Let's battle it out, Satsuma heroes!" "We will bet our lives on it! ", Yoshiharu was shaking his head as he ran. *Bang* another shot from the back just missed his ear by inches.

"Bastards! How can I just let you guys get killed while I run away! That isn't the Sagara Yoshiharu way of fighting! Don't just give up on life so easily; all of us are to return to Kyo!"

"I too must fight back with the arquebus!" Yoshiharu said, and immediately the expressions on all 500 injured heroes' faces changed as they cried "No, you can't do it, commander!"

"The commander taking an arquebus and fighting with us, I've never heard of such a thing!"

"That's why I said, I can't agree to a plan that requires you guys get killed like insects!"

"What are you talking about!? We were born to protect you!"

"Please! Our dreams are all entrusted to you now!"

"We are just insignificant soldiers; do not hesitate to kill us for your own ambitions!"

Yoshiharu's eyes started to blur with tears before they had even finished crying out against his idea.

"I... will be pained if even one of you guys died! I want to see Nobuna again, but even though I want to... Soldiers or princesses, aren't they all human beings!? Even if your statuses are low, you still have families and friends, right!? There are people waiting for you to come home, right!? So don't just say things like ‘giving up on life’!”

Yoshiharu, who was born in the peaceful 21st century, wasn't used to all the killing that took place on the battlefield. No, he would likely never get used to it.

"I don't have a family... I did say that, but that’s only because I’m from a completely different era, so I can't see them. But you guys are different! So... It will be hard to accomplish... but even so... I must make sure all of us reach Kyo safely!"

At these heartfelt words, the fearless guys were enveloped with an unspeakable feeling.

"What is this, what kind of commander is this...!"

"This guy isn't like a samurai at all...!"

"But why...our tears can't be stopped...!"

"Well said, Sagara Yoshiharu! Then, what do we do to the huge army at our backs?" Hanzo said. Zenki, using his powers, chants an incantation to release mist all around them, but the Asakura troops had already rushed all the way to the narrow mountain path and would stumble upon Yoshiharu and his force in an instant, no matter their cover.

"I will lead the arquebus squad personally. Using the 50 arquebus that I borrowed from Juubei, we must cover the main troop as they retreat! Even if it's kinda forced, we must not simply lose our lives! We must endure all this to the last second of our lives!"

Yes. From now on, we must battle on.

Yoshiharu who had been fleeing all the time, turned his horse around and shot at the Asakura troops.

"Hurry! We need 50 men! In the 500 of us, is there anyone skilled in using arquebus?"

"I'm skilled in using spears."

"Katanas for me."

"I use chains."

"Traps."

"I use punches."

...Is there no one!?

In this suicide squad, everyone was confident in their strength, every single one of them were heroes capable of fighting one to many.

But also due to that, they were a bunch of people not skilled in using arquebus.

"With this, we can't establish an arquebus squad at all! "

"Ahhh!? Juubei graciously lent me these 50 arquebus, but didn't she give me any skilled arquebus users!?"

"Sagara Yoshiharu! Decide fast, the enemy is right in front of us!"

"Hmph, though Sagara Yoshiharu is a muddle-headed monkey that loves big breasts, he always has good ideas. Especially that tasteless ‘knowledge from the future’."

Zenki said from above, and Yoshiharu, silent at the comment, suddenly had an idea flash through his mind.

Arquebus... Oda troops... Sengoku SLG!

"...I GOT IT! "The repeated volleys!"

"Repeated volleys!?"

The soldiers holding the arquebus were already fighting. Blood and screams rang out in the mountainside.

Yoshiharu explained the plan briefly.

"It's the strategy that the Oda troops employ in the ‘ Battle at Nagashino’, it's very simple! The arquebus's weakness is that it's very time-consuming to reload after every shot, so it can't fire rapidly. Before firing the second shot, the enemy will kill him already."

"So after one shot, the foot soldiers will rush in."

"We will split the 50 men into 3 teams, one being in charge of filling the gunpowder in the barrel, one in charge of lighting it up, the last team in charge of firing."

So as to say, Oda Nobunaga's "repeated volleys" was a strategy to split his marksmen troops to 1000 a team, allowing the Riflemen fire non-stop. But, it's been said that the "repeated volleys" had another specialty, that is " The time to aim will be shortened as the one who shoots and the one who reloads are different."

"We don't have anyone who can finish a job from reloading to firing." Yoshiharu noticed this problem and suddenly thought of a way.

"We will all help to prepare the gun for firing so we can let these 50 arquebus continue firing."

"Commander, with this we can fire at 3 times the speed!"

"To be shot at such a speed, the enemy troops will definitely fall into chaos."

In front of their eyes, the enemy troops had already pushed in and plungede the whole area into disarray.

But on such a narrow mountain path, even if there were only 50 arquebus the enemy will definitely be confused.

After making the resolve to battle, Yoshiharu's legs suddenly began shivering.

"Listen, Sagara Yoshiharu. Don't be scared of firing. Once you are scared, you will be killed." Zenki said at his side with a dark expression.

"Ah, yeah!"

The fingers and shoulders that had taken over the arquebus had all started shivering.

Must not get hit by the enemy.

This wasn't a game!

If he had fought on while only thinking about himself, then the spirit of the Sagara Yoshiharu corps would be lost right here.

But just as Yoshiharu's heart started to waver, in front of him was a shining Nobuna.

(Saru, is there a need to let your heart suffer so much?)

Hmmm...?

This seems to be not for me but to Katsuie...

(Oi Saru, my eyes have always been looking at the world 10 years, even 100 years in the future. Even if no one understands you, I will believe in you!)

Ahhh, I understand.

I understand.

For me, I always know you are correct.

Because of that, even if no one else understands you, I will definitely understand.

(So, when your heart is in pain, don't pray. Just think of the ‘common folks’! Let me alone suffer this pain!)

Damn it.... Ever since you were born, you have been enveloped in this country's non-stop war and fighting.

Other than you, no one else will bring peace to this world again. No, no one else *can*.

This isn't a pain only you can bear!

I...

Nobuna. If it's to protect you, I'd rather...!

"Uwahhhh...!"

Yoshiharu closed his eyes and squeezed the trigger.

The flying bullet did not hit the enemy.

The amateur arquebus squad were all bad with their weapons.

Even if it's such a close range shot, none of them had managed to hit the enemy.

But even with that, the Asakura front troops who were suddenly attacked by arquebus in the mist-covered mountain were scared stiff by the sudden burst of the gunfire.

"The arquebus is single shot! There's already one shot, no need to worry! Charge!"

Straight into the shirt of the enemy commander, with a bang! Yoshiharu's second shot was right on target.

The commander shrieked, "Ba...Bastard!!...", fainted, and fell from his horse.

"Next!"

Without any time for breathing, Yoshiharu fired the third shot.

"Th-that is a multi-shot arquebus!"

"As expected, the Oda clan has shipped new weapons in from the namban!"

With just this, the front troops of the Asakura army were defeated.

Yoshiharu's plan worked.

"Hattori squad, engaging!"

Hanzo roared and together with 10 other ninjas, they rushed into the confused Asakura front troops while throwing their shurikens at the enemies silently, and then mercilessly finishing them off with their daggers. They also scattered spikes on the floor while releasing more smoke to confuse the enemy.

In the smoke, movement had already been difficult. With the addition of gunshots ringing out in the surroundings, the Asakura front troops fell into mass confusion.

At this time.

The ground shook with a huge explosion.

The cold and merciless Hattori Hanzo seems to have ignited the explosives set by the enemy.

"Now!"

Yoshiharu shouted, "Everyone, retreat!", all 500 of the troops turned their backs on the Asakura troop and once again ran away into the mountains.

Originally, Yoshiharu's running speed had been honed playing dodgeball at high school, making him exceptionally fast, but after coming to the Sengoku era and training here, his skills were becoming better and better still.

"Nicely done, Sagara Yoshiharu. Before igniting the enemy's explosives, you succeeded in clumping the Asakura troops together."

Without Yoshiharu noticing, Hanzo was silently running beside Yoshiharu while whispering praise to him unexpectedly.

"Hanzo! That was a little too cruel! That explosion just now blew all the soldiers away!"

"Hmph. Because of that, we gained some more time... There's only one bomb left, so from now on it's up to you to guard your life."

"Leave the running to me."

As expected of the 500 who were determined to protect Nobuna's rear, though 10% of the troops had fallen, the rest are supporting and relying on each other with extraordinary strength and will.

To catch up to the ninjas who had very good speed, all of them tried their best to run and not fall back at all.

For Zenki, it was too troublesome to run, so he flew in the air.

A miracle had occurred on that battlefield, Zenki realized.

The mist that he had created emitted, Yoshiharu's " repeated volleys" and the ninja squad under the command of Hanzo were used together to great effect, and they had once again evaded the fierce attacks of the Asakura troops.

But, the biggest contribution to this miracle wasn't the strategy of "repeated volleys" that was born from tasteless knowledge, but instead was Yoshiharu's undying will that "All are to get to Kyo safely", that imparted the heroes with incomparable morale and loyalty, though only Zenki and Hanzo noticed this.

"The enemy is still chasing us, so we can't delay for even a second, but there are still numerous mountains to cross in front of us; if we don't rest, I'm afraid we can't hold on to Kyo."

Pushing at full speed, Yoshiharu was thinking about how to let his companions have a chance to rest, and

finally, they rested for a short while after crossing the peak of a mountain, on a narrow mountain path.

Yoshiharu was still worrying about the pursuing soldiers. After deciding to rest, he lay onto a bamboo leaf on the ground and soon snored.

"This fellow, is the same as an ordinary folk, so full of openings." Zenki laughed and said, and the foot soldiers said, "Though he looks like someone totally not used to war, and the way he uses the arquebus is kinda clumsy, he turned out to be an excellent commander." Everyone nodded happily.

After Yoshiharu rested, he stood up with gusto.

"Okay! Let us continue on! From now on, we have numerous mountains to cross!"

As of now, not even one of them had fled for fear of death, but even so they had lost many comrades. Half were lost during the battle with the Asakura troops, after which some thought, "I can't burden the commander due to me not being able to run," and left quietly.

That plump guy with thick eyelashes from Samoa isn't here anymore.

(Damn it...! Has that guy died...!? Damn...!)

Yoshiharu feels a heart-shattering pain.

But even so, if the commander sheds tears at such a critical period, morale would definitely fall. Yoshiharu tried his best to give a bitter smile.

In the darkness of the night, they came to a crossroads.

"Everyone is to go into the mountains, bypassing Echizen, and head towards Wakasa!"

Hanzo who had climbed onto a mountain cliff, grumbled.

Straight after this, Yoshiharu and his comrades started climbing the mountain.

Not a single soldier was uninjured.

Constantly getting spotted by the enemy, hearing "Ah, that's the enemy's commander!" and being sniped, Yoshiharu's face and forehead was full of blood. His own blood and the enemy's blood had mixed together. Yoshiharu himself did not know where the wound was.

His stomach was empty, his throat parched.

But his eyes were still sharp, and held not a sign of giving up.

"Everyone, can you all still run?"

"No problem!"

"I still feel energetic, no problem!"

"When we feel terrible, we can just think of Hime-sama's smile and our courage is boosted a hundred times! We're full of spirit!"

"Alright then! If we run to Wakasa, the enemy can't chase us. Just a little more!"

Ohhhh~! The bloodied suicide squad was still in good spirits, but at this moment...

"Not good, Sagara. It seems that the situation has taken a turn for the worse," Zenki whispered, his normally bored and lazy face wearing a serious frown.

"What is it, Zenki?"

"Wakasa's Tsuchimikado seems to be standing on Asakura's side."

"Tsuchimikado? Who is he?"

"...The leader of Japanese onmyouji. In the past, he bore the name of Abe, though now he is known as Tsuchimikado. He fled the chaotic Kyo and retired in Wakasa."

"Maybe he is the descendant of the super onmyouji from the Heian era, Abe Seimei? ...I was wondering why I didn't see him in Kyo. So he was at Wakasa!" Yoshiharu said with a sigh.

"Whoever you think this Tsuchimikado to be, he seems to want your head and has opened up a barrier while waiting for us!"

"Ah, a barrier?"

There's just darkness in front of me... Yoshiharu squinted and looked forward.

In the dark night, the scene was just as it had looked before, just uncountable mountain peaks.

Hanzo then added, "It's a little different from the barriers set by ninjas," shaking his head.

But Zenki only bared his teeth, his eyes emitting a golden glow as he looked at the barrier emitting a mysterious light invisible to ordinary people.

"Hmph. The barrier will be upon us once we close in and head towards it."

Across Zenki's white forehead was a streak of sweat.

Here it is.

Tsuchimikado's onmyouji.

Not using his own body.

Not bound by gravity.

Supported by a power that can't be seen.

Floating slowly from the mountain.

"This fellow..."

"Tsuchimikado?"

"Yes, I'm the head of the Tsuchimikado clan, Tsuchimikado Hisanaga. We should return to Kyo now, but before I arrive, shouldn't I prepare some gifts for Kyo's new masters, Azai-kun and Asakura-kun? Tonight, right here, we've decided to take the head of this Oda clan's Saru!"

In front of them was a young kid not more than 10 years old.

A pale face and cold eyes like a doll. As an onmyouji, he looked similar to Hanbei, but that ice cold heart was totally different from hers.

That cold smile revealed his utmost confidence in his own strength.

This small fellow, looks like he isn't ordinary, maybe not even a human. What a detestable child...

Although Yoshiharu was trying to act cool, he noticed that he was soaked with sweat.

It's true that Tsuchimikado Hisanaga was just a child.

But precisely because of this, he possessed a cruelty known only to children in his small body.

Strength, it looked like his strength was limitless.

So, he wants to use this strength...

To kill his enemies.

Like how a child cruelly rips the wings off of an insect that he caught.

This is human nature; there is nothing shameful about such a thing.

And it's not out of hatred.

Maybe such a childish way to use his own strength is Tsuchimikado Hisanaga's principle.

So...

Things like respecting life, thinking about others... To Tsuchimikado Hisanaga, the child who had already attained the position of the leader of onmyouji, those are worthless.

- rustle*

As expected, the enemy has moved... Yoshiharu realized.

"As expected, they had run to Wakasa... Oda Nobuna's godlike speed had already seen her to Omi, but if I catch this famous Oda clan's Saru, Azai-kun and Asakura-kun should be very happy..."

(He is still a child, yet he has the intention to kill everyone.)

Hanzo threw a shuriken, but it did not hit the body of the floating Tsuchimikado Hisanaga.

As if there was an invisible wall protecting Hisanaga.

The heroes, who have yet to discover the severity of the situation, were panting at the side.

And the shikigamis...

In the night sky, more than 10 strange shikigamis appeared behind Tsuchimikado Hisanaga.

Zenki let out a roar.

"Hisanaga, the Tsuchimikado are just a defeated dogs who fled to Wakasa after failing to protect Kyo."

"...Hmph! That fox-faced guy is a shikigami, right? This is the first time that I, the genius onmyouji and the descendant of Abe Seimei, have seen a high-rank shikigami who can transform into a human completely like you. But regrettably, you are alone, right? The strongest point of shikigami is its numbers. No matter how capable you are, you can't win against the amount that I've summoned!"

"Hisanaga. What crazy shit are you talking about, saying things like returning to Kyoto. You think this is a child's play?"

Hehe, Hisanaga's red lips tilt upwards while he gave a fake laugh.

"A rural onmyouji like Takenaka may have followed Nobuna to power in Kyo. The true leader of the onmyoujis is our Tsuchimikado clan, and though we are referred to as the reincarnations of Koumei, we do not want to bear such a title. But because of our title, as troublesome as it is, we still have to go to Kyoto to fight with that ignorant rural onmyouji. Takenaka and I,

whoever is stronger will be determined once we do battle . Okay, understand?"

"Stop floating around up there, can't you come down and talk like a normal person!?" Yoshiharu yelled out to Hisanaga while jumping up and down.

"Ha, no matter how you jump, you can't reach me. Are you an idiot?"

No more useless chatter.

I will finish all of you right here.

The surroundings filled with darkness in an instant...

Numerous shikigamis launched an attack at the troops who had set up camp at the peak of the mountain.

"D-d-demons have appeared!!!"

"How can we win!?!"

They were all brave men who excelled at fighting multiple enemies, but against these shikigamis who were violently attacking them from the sky, they could only let out pathetic howls.

Once their morale is lost, no matter how brave an army is, their formation will collapse in an instant.

One by one, they were blown away like grass.

(To have summoned this many shikigamis! Zenki alone cannot win against them! Ninja techniques are useless against shikigamis too! But, I will never give up!)

Yoshiharu raised his arquebus.

"D-damn it!!"

Even if...my life is fated to end here, I must...

I must...

Endure to the last minute... To fight against fate!

Part 4

"Hime-sama. We have entered Kuchiki Valley! If we can go through here successfully, all that's left is the highway, Kyo is right ahead!"

Oda Nobuna who had abandoned Saru, Sagara Yoshiharu, was now riding her famed horse, "

Rigatanakuro", speeding through the mountain path of Wakasa.

Back when they were first heading out from Kyoto, they marched pridefully along Lake Biwa down the western Omi streets. But now, the western Omi streets are full of enemy soldiers. There was no way to escape but to go deep into the mountains.

Ever since they had started, they had not once stopped running to rest or sleep.

Her tears had dried.

Her chest was tight, leaving her almost unable to breathe.

In her body, there was not a drop of water left for tears .

Regret.

Anguish.

Pain that threatens to rip her chest apart.

Maybe this enormous pain would just destroy the weak body of Nobuna.

But...

Nobuna has to live on!

Even if she was full of wounds from falling down, if she couldn't go back to Kyo alive, Yoshiharu's sacrifice would become meaningless.

So, Nobuna bit her lip and held on to her belief.

That dumbass who threw away his son, Nagamasa's future, Nobuna's Tenka Fubu's ambition, Yoshiharu's future, Azai Hisamasa! Nobuna was furious!

Even though she was fuming mad, Nobuna clung to the reigns of her horse desperately, crying and struggling to not fall from her saddle.

But, such fury was already...

Beyond the point she could endure!

"Hime-sama, are you alright? This Kuchiki Valley is governed by Kuchiki Shinano. Shinano is part of the Azai's clan and will most likely stop us from passing, and our retreat route is blocked by the Kuchiki Castle. Our only options is to pass by Kuchiki Valley."

"...Hime-sama. Please wait here for a while."

The two protectors, Katsuie and Inichiyo both ran hastily to Nobuna's side.

The two of them were covered in wounds as well.

Judging from the fact that the vanguard retreated, taking this path would not be easy. At that moment, " That is the princess of the Oda clan!" "If caught alive, the reward is a hundred kan, her head itself is worth fifty kan!" The enemy soldiers swarmed at them from all sides , their eyes alight with bloodlust.

But, the master Nobuna must return to Kyo as soon as possible. If she was delayed, fake news like "Nobuna is dead" might spread, and who knew what Kyo might turn into. Only escaping from the enemies' hands and returning to Kyo would allow the army to regroup so as to fight Asai and Asakura. Even if the possibility was as

small as a bean, they had to fight for the chance to save Yoshiharu....

Because Nobuna must return to Kyo as soon as possible, she needs focus solely on her speed.

By now, the aides protecting Nobuna had dwindled.

The ones remaining were the brave Shibata Katsuie and the child, Maeda Inuchiyo, who was swinging her huge bamboo spear.

Without these two loyal aides protecting her, Nobuna's head might have fallen multiple times.

"Hi-Hime-sama!"

"...Negotiate with Kuchiki Shinano, turn him into one of us."

"...It must be done."

Nobuna struggled to keep her eyes open, and her speech no longer had her usual air of superiority.

"...Where is Manchiyo and the rest?"

"To allow the rearmost troops to retreat safely, Nagahide is opening up more paths of retreat into the mountains, Mitsuhide and Motoyasu are helping too."

"...Dearuka. That is kinda unnecessary..."

"Hime-sama! Unnecessary? Everyone is fighting for their lives to not let Saru die! Please get your spirits up! Hime-sama!"

"...That...is hypocritical. We abandoned Saru and left him to die... What everyone is doing is useless."

"Hime!? Wh-what is happening to you!? This isn't like you, Hime!"

"Oi, Riku... When Father became sick, didn't he call many monks to do those rituals to pray?"

"Y-Yes? There was such a thing, but..."

"...Those monks were chanting those useless incantations, and in the end, Father didn't get better. They came to do those rituals because we were worried about Father's illness. What I want to say is this. Those monks used this weak psychology on us to earn money. So, I locked them up in the hall and burned all of them

together. I hate cheaters, they had known that the rituals wouldn’t heal Father, yet we still invited them... That is, hypocrisy..."

"You... Y-you're right, Hime-sama. Wh-when the hall was on fire, no one bothered to save them!"

"At that time, Hime-sama was totally furious... Just like the sixth demon lord..." said Katsuie.

"...Father's funeral was totally unnecessary too. Dead people turned to ashes. Things like pain or suffering, such feelings will be gone. We hold burials, letting those monks chant, everyone crying on the floor, in the end, those are all for us... Showing a look of sadness... To a dead person, that is completely useless. So I, dressed like a hooligan, rushed into Father's funeral and made a big mess..."

"...And Saru's retreat? I already know that they aren't coming back... Ah. We let them protect our rear... Honestly, we ordered them to ‘die’... And then we hypocritically create retreat paths for them. Those are mere attempts to satisfy ourselves, just like a funeral.

Really, so laughable... But... But, the one who ordered Saru to ‘die’...isn't Manchiyo...but, myself... Uhh, waaaahh!"

I thought I had ran out of tears.

But...now they're still flowing.

From the depths of her eyes... The depths of her soul, it seemed, tears were squeezed out.

"Ahh, Hime-sama... Hime-sama is becoming stranger and stranger! Hime-sama, just why!?"

The sobbing Katsuie felt terrible.

At her side.

- Bam*

"...Hime-sama, please cut this out."

Inuchiyo gave a hard punch to Nobuna.

"...Crying is useless. If Hime-sama dies, the sacrifice of Yoshiharu and his troops will become meaningless!"

"Wh-wh-wh-wh-why, Inuchiyo!?" Katsuie howled.

"...Inuchiyo...? What..what am I doing...? Where...am I? "

"...This is Kuchiki Valley. We must negotiate with Kuchiki Shinano now."

"Yeah... Right."

"...Hime-sama. Yoshiharu is alive. Right now, we must believe in him. It's the same for Nagahide and the rest, we must believe in them. They are risking more than they should to open more retreat paths for Yoshiharu, even when they themselves are retreating. And those who volunteered to protect us are with Yoshiharu, soldiers whose names we don't even know, Hime-sama should not be so cruel now!"

Ah, Nobuna looked upon these aides as she opened her eyes.

Yoshiharu... I can't leave Yoshiharu on the battlefield by himself.

The 500 soldiers who were moved by Yoshiharu's loyalty had been pouring their spirit into performing

their role, for Yoshiharu's sake, and for Nobuna's sake as well. Most of them were mercenaries hired with gold. People who could have simply escaped or switched sides ...

I've only been worrying about Saru... Saru threw his life away for me, yet I had forgotten all about them! Forgotten the importance of their lives...

Nobuna smiled and regained her composure, so that Inuchiyo and Katsuie could stop worrying about her.

"...Thanks, Inuchiyo. What...what have I been doing. Yes, Saru can't just die so easily! I must, I must kick them in their butts, have them evade the Asakura troops, and hide in the mountains to escape!"

"...*Nods*"

"As the commander, I can't be weeping like this here. Sorry, Inuchiyo. Once we reach Kyo, I will give all you guys Uiroumochi."

"...*Nod*Nod*"

"Hime-sama has woken up! Inuchiyo! And Saru, I must not let you guys worry about Hime-sama... Definitely not!!"

"...Inuchiyo too, will take up her spear to attack once Yoshiharu returns. To cry and die while protecting our rear isn't Yoshiharu's style!"

"Alright! This resolve is rare, Inu-chan! Let us try our best for Saru!"

"...Destroy the enemy!!"

Seeing that Katsuie and Inuchiyo had been encouraging her all this time, Nobuna held back her tears and let out a sigh.

"They did not cry even once ever since we escaped from Kanegasaki castle.... Actually, Riku and Inuchiyo were feeling so sad that they wanted to cry out loud.... yet they endured it for me. To not let me become even sadder.... How can I be so weak....."

Another urge to cry rushed up her heart, but Nobuna forced it down.

"I've decided. Before reaching Kyo safely, I will not shed another tear!"

An oath seared in her heart, with her hand blocking the sunlight, she looks upon Kuchiki castle.

"Kuchiki Valley.... is really like a ninja hiding by the side of Kyo. I'm afraid it won't be easy to pass through. Inuchiyo?"

".....Afraid so. Kuchiki Valley is the evacuation area for the numerous Ashikaga shoguns, a very special place. No matter who, if they tried to pass through with force, the other side will launch an attack."

"Dearuka. Now is really the time to buck up."

"But, who should we send to negotiate with Kuchiki Shinano? I don't know the guy. Inuchiyo?" Katsuie said.

".....Not letting Inuchiyo go."

"If Nagahide or Mitsuhide were here, I would suggest they go. Should I wait for them to return?"

"No can do, Riku. Kuchiki Shinano belongs to the Asai clan, right? If so, we don't know when they will attack us ; just sneaking in for now is too dangerous."

Besides, we need to hurry back to Kyo, and announce to the world, "I, Oda Nobuna am still here.", regroup my army..... And I have to hurry and send reinforcements for Saru.... Nobuna swallowed her greatest motivation with difficulty.

"Ye...Yes! But if I'm the envoy, I will most likely mess things up.... I, am not comfortable in negotiating. When I'm talking to Kuchiki, what will I do if I just killed him on impulse, Hime-sama?"

"Hmph... Are you dumb, Riku? We're in this very situation now because we're running straight ahead all the time. If we keep saying such things, then we will never be able to escape. It's as if we are strangling ourselves!"

"Ah, I understand! Wa, I'm really sorry.... My brain short circuited just now....."

"Brain... short circuited?"

"That is what Saru would say, Hime-sama. I don't really understand the meaning, but it's a thing he says when I'm being stupid. It seems to mean that I'm behaving stupidly, or electric currents are unable to flow through... I'm getting furious just talking about this! Saru that bastard!!!!!"

"What a Saru-like style."

Inuchiyo was tilting her head left to right.....

But it wasn't because she couldn’t follow the situation. Rather, she seemed to be trying to express that it's useless to send out an envoy, in her own introverted way.

"If it requires such great linguistic skills, then let me go . Ok, I will directly negotiate with Kuchiki Shinano!"

Nobuna had decided and was about to gallop away on her horse.

"Nonononononono, Hime-sama! If you do that, things will get worse! You are like a moth flying towards a candle flame, you won't return!"

"....Definitely not. Hime-sama might have good linguistic skills, but your words are often harsh and self-centered. If you provoke the other party here, things will become much worse."

Katsuie and Inuchiyo rushed forward to stop Nobuna.

"But, just who will go and negotiate?"

".....Hmmm, then let me go."

In the deep bushes.....

Wearing a chinese outfit over her tanned skin, sitting upright and puffing out her chest, a woman was slowly approaching them.

"Hisahide?"

"......Matsunaga Danjo."

Matsunaga Danjo Hisahide.

Also known as, "Venomous Scorpion."

A repeated offender on revolting that had plunged Kyo into a state of chaos.

Responsible for burning the great Buddha of Nara, poisoning her master and the Miyoshi clan, attacking Ashikaga Yoshiteru and destroying the Ashikaga Shogunate amongst other dark legends, the poisonous flower that blooms in the sengoku era.

Biting a long tobacco pipe, her face revealed an alluring smile as she returned the surprised stares of Nobuna and the rest.

"Where had you been for such a long while? Didn't you flee?"

".....This fellow appearing here suddenly is weird, she might be doing something to betray Hime-sama."

"Hehe. Yes, if I betray Nobuna-sama today, then I will be able to easily regain control of Kyoto. What do you think, Nobuna-sama? If I agree to help you negotiate with Shinano, then.... defect to Asai and Asakura."

“You bastard~!” Katsuie glared at her, while her hands held her sword tightly, at this moment, Nobuna stopped Katsuie.

"Danjo! I'll leave it to you. No matter what, I must live and go back to Kyoto! You must hurry, hurry! I'm relying on you!"

"Hime-sama! How can you trust someone like her!? Someone like her.....!"

Once again, Katsuie was stopped, Nobuna and Hisahide looked at each other and nodded.

Towards this evil girl, Oda Nobuna who "Viper" Saitou Dousan was said to dote on, she seems very interested somehow.

Capturing Mino, Dousan who was fighting to unify the world by using trade, he was like a teacher, a second father to Nobuna who aims for "Tenka Fubu".

She who had broken traditions again and again, who had been disliked by her mother due to her not following traditions, to Matsunaga Danjo Hisahide, Nobuna was almost the same.... One can even say that Nobuna had finally met a "mother-like" figure for the first time.

"Nobuna-sama? Now, you guys are the danjo who controls Kyo. Oda Danjo-sama Nobuna. Right now, I'm just a shadow working under you."

"Enough. Danjo is Danjo. You should just call me ‘ Nobuna’."

"Ok, I know it's the position that was given to you by the Gose, sorry. But I actually like those guys."

After a short pause, she narrowed her eyes to a slit and straightened her back. With a laugh, Hisahide started to gallop away towards Kuchiki castle.

"We are lucky that the other party is still immature. We will be able to contact Kuchiki Shinano quickly."

Using her own long and red tongue to lick her lips, Hisahide, who was known as the evil woman reveals a trademark-like dark smile.

Till now, this evil woman's smile had poisoned away how many people; just how many people had fallen to it.. ....

Katsuie shivered.

With a face that came from the blood of the far western areas of the world, she was inhumanly beautiful, and at the same time this same face could only be described as terrifying.

"Ahhh.... Oi Inuchiyo, it's not that I don't mind. Why is Hime-sama allying herself with such a demon?"

"....Ah....Isn't easy to say."

"To use it's own stomach as bait for the venomous scorpion and viper. The world really has no good animals."

".....Dogs, are good animals."

"Oioi, are you listening, Riku?"

"I'm....I'm sorry!"

"Right now, all we can do is to entrust our fate to Danjo, Danjo will definitely not betray me." Nobuna nodded her head heavily.

Part 5

"Ah, Ahh, isn't this Matsunaga Danjo!? Such tanned skin, as expected from a well seasoned warrior." At Kuchiki castle, Kuchiki Shinano had come to meet her himself. For a castle owner, he was extremely young.

This Kuchiki Shinano who was born in Kuchiki, a place where distinguished people retire, for a sengoku warrior, his body build was very thin.

"Hehe. I was born with this skin color. I have not taken any injuries on the battlefield, so I maintained my young looks."

That alluring smile and the huge bosom that was revealed from her clothes had all made Shinano very flustered.

The fan was opened up in an instant while Shinano revealed a scared smile.

"...Ok, I've heard of Matsunaga Danjo being the most evil of persons, having destroyed the Ashikaga Shogunate and burning Nara's great Buddha, but right now you aren't quite the same."

"I'm just an ordinary citizen in Kyo, there isn't much to talk about."

"Even so, I can't agree to your request."

"Oi, I haven't even said anything."

"I have already received reports saying that Oda Nobuna has run here from Echizen, correct? Don't think that you can just pass Kuchiki Valley like this."

That is impossible, Kuchiki Shinano's face seemed to say.

"I don't want to let Oda Nobuna think that I'm hers. After being betrayed by the Asai clan and gradually sinking into oblivion, if I allowed her to return to Kyoto, Asai and Asakura will attack Kyo together, and she won't last a minute."

"You are wrong."

"Matsunaga Danjo. Don't tell me you think that Asai is a despicable traitor and Oda Nobuna is in the right? You

destroyed the Ashikaga shogunate! With an evil woman like you saying such hypocritical words, I find it only more difficult to trust Oda Nobuna."

"I believe that Oda Nobuna is strong. Don't tell me you think otherwise?"

"Oda Nobuna has already lost."

"No, winning and losing are common matters to warriors. As long as one lives on, he or she can once again rise up. What the one who is victorious in the end needs is determination, determination to never give up."

"Asai and Asakura's determination isn't enough, but Nobuna's is?"

"Yes."

Hisahide face revealed her gentle smile while she glanced into Shinano's eyes.

"Let's leave this discussion for another time, Danjo-dono, we will know soon enough how to proceed in the future. How about a cup of tea?"

"Hehe, thank you so much."

At this moment, should I kill Matsunaga Danjo....or..... While his heart is struggling, Shinano's uneasy expression revealed itself on his face.

On the other side, Matsunaga Hisahide had already decided on a plan to enter Kuchiki castle.

If Kuchiki Shinano dared to say no, then the true nature of the scorpion would show itself. The numerous puppets using crimson flames will surround the whole Kuchiki residence.....

"More than anything, I think Nobuna-sama is really a cute girl to be able to accept someone like me. If you betray this little girl and cause her defeat while you yourself lived on like a coward, from that point on I will kill all who stand in my way..... If you dare to say 'No', no matter how many years, how many decades, I will kill everyone in this valley, no, all the animals, the plants, all of them, not one will be left living."

Hisahide's heart moved.

Under a fake smile, her love, her hatred that did not fit her face, every one of Hisahide's feelings raged stronger than any normal Japanese man could know.

Facing the dark and overwhelming killing intent that was emitting everywhere from her, the young Shinano retreated in an instant.

"Shinano-sama? How about letting me prepare the tea? "

Shinano swallowed his saliva.

"You, don't tell me, you want to poison me?"

"Hehe, it's regrettable, but I've been asked by Nobuna-sama to not poison any advisors. Right now, in some way, you may still be either Nobuna-sama's advisor or Asai's man, so I can't be that rude to you yet."

"Are you threatening me? I... I am not a guy that is so easily intimidated."

"Relax, there isn't any poison."

First, Hisahide used her own touch to lick the tea.

That soft red tongue, licking the teacup like a soft invertebrate.

Once again, Shinano swallowed his saliva, but, this time round, the meaning of it is different.

His brain is numb.

In this room, not knowing when, a strange aroma.... A scent that Shinano had never known before, a sweet fragrance was filling the room.

"Shinano-sama, don't tell me you don't believe me?"

"Poi...Poisoning someone is too easy, the teacup might have something hidden in it, the part that you licked might not have poison, but the rest of it will have, isn't it right?"

"Hehe, if so, let me show you, the proof that the rest of it wasn't smeared with poison."

- Lick*
- Lick*

Hisahide's eyes were narrowed into a silt while she glanced at Shinano's eyes, putting the teacup on her palm , she licked all the sides of it.

That extremely alluring body, Shinano is already panting, his whole body hot with passion.

".....Weird... Such a weird feeling..... This fragrance.....?
"

"Hehe, *lick* Ok, like this, there is no problem touching any side of the teacup, I had already used my own tongue to clean it all up. But if you think my saliva is poisonous, then your life will be in danger."

"....Ca...Can human's saliva be poisonous?"

Shinano's hand received Hisahide's teacup before he could realize his hand was extended.

Hisahide's..... teacup that was filled with that alluring saliva.

"Not... Not poison... No... I should say.... It's fragrant... This.... This taste is fragrant....?"

"Come. Do something, because I'm a scorpion. Ah.... Hahaha."

Shinano can no longer detect Hisahide's weird behavior.

Hisahide is soaked with sweat, and her breath came in pants.

In between the deep valley of her breasts, the sweat flowed through them.

But, that fragrance that seemingly numbed the brain.....

Shinano head began going berserk.

Drink.... tea.....

Drinking the saliva that Hisahide left behind, that extremely fragrant fluid.

At that instant.

"So...So refreshing... So... So comfortable. Such a wonderful tea, this is my first time drinking it....."

Shinano's overflowing saliva dripped drop by drop onto the ground while he laughed out loud.

".....Dan...Danjo.... No...Now that I think about it.... It's... It's not like I can't agree with you.... ha...Hahaha."

Hisahide leid down, letting her outfit fall from her shoulder, another hand shaking the fan while she smiled like a little girl.

".....I... I can't take it anymore. Ah....Ahhhh. Come... Come and hug me, if you hug me, let Nobuna pass.... it... isn't a problem, right? Haha!"

"......Hehehe, it's my honor."

"The dark brown skin of foreigners, haha....! Now that I see it, so beautiful.... So beautiful.....!"

"......Then, Shinano-sama? Please embark, on your never ending sweet dreams."

Hisahide's lips gave a light kiss to Shinano's ears, and suddenly something seemed to slip in.

"Ah, Ahhh, what is this.... My ear.....!"

"Hehe.... You, are already one of my puppets."

Ahhhh!!!

In Shinano's ears, a hot fluid was injected in an instant.

Hisahide left Shinano's side while laughing loudly.

"He, hehehe. As if someone like you who doesn't know anything could hug me. Come back after another 10 years. Be played around by me in your dreams!"

".....Wh...What did you do.... Whore!"

In an instant, Shinano returned to his senses.

This strange fragrance.... And the saliva that Danjo smeared onto the teacup.... Damn it, I've fallen for Danjo's tricks!

".....Don't tell me, you planned to keep the poison in your mouth and then smear it on the teacup....? And gambled that I would fall for it....! Hmph, interesting.... Ahhh, but this fragrance, what is this rotten fruit-like fragrance.....?"

In the next instant, his sudden return to his senses was extinguished like a flame being put out.

Suddenly, Shinano tilt his head like a puppet.

".....Ok, I got it. I will allow Oda Nobuna to pass. And at the same time, protect her on her way to Kyo. I, Kuchiki Shinano, will be the comrade of Oda Nobuna

from now on, the puppet of the Oda clan. Ahahaha.... hahahaha!"

At the same time, Hisahide who had breathed in the same toxin laughed.

"It's an honor, an honor." To her victim who had just fallen for her tricks, she opened her arms and bowed.

Part 6

"Nobuna-sama, everything is within our control. Shinano has agreed to arrange for guards to send you back to Kyo."

Katsuie and Nobuna shared a shocked glance.

Who could have thought that... Who could have thought that she can even get soldiers from Shinano as bodyguards? What an unexpected outcome.

Just how did Matsunaga Hisahide manage to persuade Shinano?

And why did Hisahide feel so weird? An indescribable fragrance floated around her.

Ah.....Katsuie suddenly shouted.

"Yo...Yo...You fellow, don't tell me, you did something disgusting, so as to let Shinano join our side?"

"Hehe. I did not do anything disgusting. I... am not such a despicable woman. At most, I just did something unpleasant, hehe, hehehehe."

Ahhhh.... Katsuie was shocked.

Demonic... Demonic woman.....!

"Hi...Hime-sama! Danjo, we can't let her follow us! If she did something bad, she won't admit it anyway!"

"Now isn't the time to consider such things, Riku. Now , full speed ahead to Kyo! With these guards, we are no longer afraid of any pursuing soldiers!"

Inuchiyo bowed her head deeply.

Part 7

"Not good, we have been discovered, get down now!"

Ahhhhhhh.....!

The shikigami army was still searching for Yoshiharu and his gang.

Yoshiharu and the others had hidden themselves in the bushes while, above their heads, a multitude of shikigamis were flying around.

These low intelligence life forms were floating in the air like vultures searching for dying warriors.

From then on, Yoshiharu and the rest were pursued by the shikigami and the Asakura troops, while hiding from villagers and local warriors who are searching for escaping warriors.

At this point, the company had been reduced to less than half.

Half of them had either been killed by the pursuing soldiers or had dropped out due to heavy injuries.

Yoshiharu and the others' visions started to blur. They were already so tired that they could barely tell whether they were alive or not.

No one held any strength left to carry on.

"....Is it day... or night? .....Where is this, Hanzou?"

"The boundary between Wakasa and Western Omi, near Mizuzaka kai.

"Damn it.... We just reached the entrance of Omi? It's still far from Kyo."

Since that time when Tsuchimikado Hisanaga surrounded them with the barrier, Yoshiharu and the half that remained fired a shot of the arquebus near midnight.

Why would they fire a shot of the arquebus? The shikigamis hate such a sound. A high level shikigami like Zenki is able to endure the fear rationally, but these low level shikigami cannot hide their fear towards the arquebus.

In the past, Zenki had told him shikigami's weakness; Yoshiharu realized it unknowingly or coincidentally.

Maybe, the arquebus that Yoshiharu and the rest have may be enough to scare those Tsuchimikado's shikigami away.

Let's do it! Yoshiharu led the rest of the 40 riflemen squad and fired together at the night sky.

The shikigamis fled, and during the period they are panicking, by some miracle, Yoshiharu and the rest managed to break the barrier and they started on their escape back to Kyo.

But Tsuchimikado was incredibly persistent after setting his sights on Yoshiharu's head.

As if failure would be a scar on his very pride, he chased after Yoshiharu.

And Yoshiharu and his gang had already used up the rest of the ammunition.

If they were caught by the shikigamis again, there wouldn’t be enough gunpower for another volley.

And, in the worst case scenerio, if the pursuing shikigamis caught up with them on the retreat paths that Niwa Nagahide opened up for them, they would have no choice but to go onto the mountain paths full of dangerous beasts.

While they were moving slowly, there were numerous dropouts.

"Now is the period to decide the victor."

Lowering his face, Yoshiharu waved at Zenki, Hanzou and the representative of the troops, they gathered together for a meeting. Those people who escaped with them had already displayed strength far exceeding that of a normal human, and their backs were bowed with exhaustion.

"We are totally helpless towards Wakasa's Tsuchimikado. If this goes on, we will all be eliminated. Does anyone have some good ideas?"

"Those demons, no matter how we see it, we can't win against them..... If we can use spears and stab wildly at the sky to scare them away....." The soldiers mumbled, hugging their heads.

There isn't anyone in the troop, not one that could hit the flying shikigamis with arquebus.

Though the most popular plan is scaring them and running away, there wasn’t enough ammo left. If their next shots didn’t kill, they would be unable to escape.

In other words, the one solution left is to bet everything on their arquebus, but if they finished up the ammo, everyone would be dead.

"I'm sorry, Commander! Our brains are useless, and we don't know what to do!"

"If this goes on, the commander and Hime-sama can't meet again."

"You guys, don't say such things anymore! Right now, we have to get what remains of us back to Kyo! No... No more sacrifices!"

"Yoshiharu-sama, don't be disheartened!"

"Yes! With you thinking about us, we are satisfied. But in the end, you are different from us foot soldiers."

".....No. Looking at our companions falling one by one, I had gradually realized that there is no difference in value of life....."

"Commander! Now is not the time to talk about this philosophy, look at the situation now! If the commander died at such a situation, what should Hime-sama do!?"

"As a man, I had already sworn an oath to protect you to my death, if you dismiss us at this moment, I won't forgive you for the rest of my life, Yoshiharu-sama!"

"Yes! Let us fulfill our own dreams. Yoshiharu-sama!"

You all.... Uhhh.... All of you.... bastards....! You guys... and me, we are all idiots whose heart was taken away by Oda-sama! If it's not Nobuna, I don't care about the rest, but this time around, I have made my resolve to claim the reward that's rightfully mine.....!

Slowly, a weak grace unique to commanders was revealed. Yoshiharu held the hands of the soldiers together, and though he feared there would be an outburst of laughter, in the end all he could hear was their rhythmic panting.

"Here it comes again...." "It hasn't stopped from last night." Hanzou and Zenki, who were never tired, shared a glance and nodded.

"Hmmm, to be jealous of my master Hanbei's activities , the Tsuchimikado clan has really fallen. Anyway, they are the heads of omyoujis from the last era of Abe Seimei's line of omyoujis. The time has really changed."

Zenki jumped around like a frog while sighing.

"Yoshiharu. The era of omyoujis should have ended long ago."

"But the Tsuchimikado of this era isn't weak! Is there a way to defeat all of those ominous shikigamis, Zenki? If not, they will be searching for us like those aircrafts from the air force."

Hmmm, though I don't really understand the namban language... but Zenki laughed.

"I don't know what this 'aircraft' is, but our strength as of now is too weak; we can't fight against that amount of shikigamis. And part of the reason is also that, compared to our motivation to flee to Kyo, the courage required to defeat them something completely different."

"Then, what should we do? It's nothing if it's just man to man, but to face off against a shikigami, what will the modern man do?"

"In these circumstances, we should seal their dragon hole and cut the dragon vein around this area."

"Dragon hole? Dragon vein?"

What were those words that just entered his ears? Yoshiharu did not understand.

"The dragon vein is the pathway through which ‘Ki’ flows in the ground. The dragon hole is the main area of the dragon veins and it's a special place that ‘Ki’ flows out."

If we imagine the flowing of "Ki" as railways.... Then the dragon vein is the railways that "Ki" travels and the dragon holes are the train stations that "Ki" flows in and out, Yoshiharu nodded at his rationalization.

"The shikigamis who were summoned from talismans need to maintain their life by absorbing the ‘Ki’ from the dragon hole. So as to say, if we seal the dragon holes nearby, the shikigamis will become weaker." Hanzou whispered.

"Hmmm, if we can find a big dragon hole and seal it, we should be able to finish these shikigamis. At most, I might disappear with them. Since my master, Hanbei used just 5 talismans to summon me, it's already not easy for me to move for such a long period of time.

Seems workable.... If we are able to make these shikigamis disappear, even if Zenki isn't around, it will be much more advantageous for the path ahead. Shikigamis disappearing isn't death, so even if Zenki disappears here, they should be able to meet in Kyoto.

"So where is it, the dragon hole?"

"Dragon holes are commonly found in the mountains, normally caves or big holes on the ground. Places with dragon holes normally had shrines erected near them so as to prevent ‘Ki’ from being used for evil purposes. It's like the one who protects Kyoto's gate of demons, Mount Hiei is actually Kyo's biggest shrine.

"So that’s the meaning behind building shrines at strategic spots." Yoshiharu said.

"Then, let's find the shrine and destroy it!"

"Ok, let's go and find it!"

"Wa...Wa...Wait up you guys! If you just go search like this, you will be the target for those who are searching for escapees! And, you may be found by the shikigami army.

Yoshiharu stopped the soldiers.

"At such deep mountain areas, we have to assume that there aren't any shrines erected near dragon holes. I'm afraid Tsuchimikado has chased us to a place where there are no shrines so as to not let us find any dragon holes."

Zenki's eyes glittered while he nodded.

Ok, we will do it this way!

Yoshiharu straightened up his body.

"Then, let's go! Where off first, Zenki!?"

"Find caves."

"I get it, there are still many caves emitting smoke! Because caves are actually holes that are opened up on the ground."

The heroes of the troops all nod their head while whispering, "Ohhhh."

These people, taking what's left of their ammo and weapons, turned to the enemy.

They searched in the mountains for nearly half an hour .

Zenki, taking a rope down to the bottom of a valley pointed to a cave while shouting, "There"!"

"Hmmm, this ‘Ki’ that is rising up, if we seal such a place....."

But.....

At that time, those people in the troops had already reached the limit of their exhaustion and excitement and had already lost their cool heads.

"Ok, let's go!"

"Seal it off!"

"If so, the commander can return to Kyo!"

"Wait, you guys. This might be a trap laid by Tsuchimikado. First we should let the ninja squad check things....."

Though Zenki tried to stop them, but they had already climbed down the cliff and ran towards the cave.

Yoshiharu too said, "Can't help it", and slipped down from the cliff while protecting his arquebus.

But.

There was really a trap.

In the cave, there are numerous shikigamis under the control of Tsuchimikado and they flew out in an instant.

The heroes of the troops at this moment, all of them had the resolve to battle to their deaths.

We've fallen for their trap!

"Sagara-sama, run!"

"We will be your shield to stop them!"

"No, don't say such stupid things! I won't abandon you all!"

Yoshiharu took his arquebus and rushed to the front.

Yoshiharu could not abandon any of these companions that had come with him through such a long way.

"Hisanaga!!! Come out, you bastard!!! Your hands are full of blood! Playing with peoples' lives like it's nothing!!!"

Shooting with his arquebus non-stop, soon, the ammo had finished.

One by one, the heroes were caught by the claws of the monsters in the sky and shredded.

If this goes on, all of us will be eliminated!

Looking at the tragic scene in front of him while he went down from the cliff, Zenki whispered, "Oi, Hanzou. If this goes on, I will be lectured by my master. Hurry and take Sagara Yoshiharu away."

Suddenly, Hattori Hanzou appeared out of nowhere and whispered back, ".....No. The ammo is depleted. There is nowhere to run. Sagara Yoshiharu has made his resolve, right?"

"If that's the case, let us kill him."

Hanzou laughed lightly, and glanced at Zenki.

"......Understood."

And nodded softly.

He jumped suddenly but silently.

Hanzou threw a smoke bomb at the chaotic battle, obstructing the shikigamis' view of the battlefield.

All the while being silent, he grabbed Yoshiharu from behind.

"Release me, Hanzou! I'm going to battle to my last breath here!"

"Hmph, don't tell me you want to watch these soldiers die with your own eyes?"

"It's the same if we run away, so we should just die together while fighting!"

"Oda Nobuna said the same thing at Kanegasaki castle, but she decided in the end for you to protect her rear even though you might be killed, why?"

"That fellow, is the leader of a province, she must live! But, I....."

".....You, don't tell me you feel that everything is okay since you have no attachments? Sagara Yoshiharu, are you saying that now? From your heart?"

".....That..."

Actually, it might be so. But... So many soldiers died for me. And, Nobuna shedded tears for me.....

I can't do such a thing.....!

But, if I sacrifice myself, it's a fact that my companions might be saved. Tsuchimikado is aiming for me only.

Yoshiharu wiped the blood left on his forehead and the tears in his eyes as he swallowed his saliva.

"Then Yoshiharu, I ask you again, will you die for your companions?"

"Ahhh! I don't want to give Nobuna up.... Ah, damn it, I don't wanna die! But, I don't want to abandon my companions! I, want too much! I'm sorry that I want things to be perfect!"

"Ok then, you will die right here. Sagara Yoshiharu, Oda clan's rising star, the hero of Sunomata Ichiya castle; if the one whose head has a bounty is to die here, Tsuchimikado or those who are searching for you for that very bounty will all lose their motive. Other than that, there is no other way."

".....Hmmmm? Hanzou? You.....?"

"It seems like, it's over."

Finally, someone walked out of the cave, Tsuchimikado Hisanaga flapped the fan in his hand.

The smoke that Hanzou released was blown away.

Tsuchimikado had appeared.

Hattori Hanzou who was soaked with blood.

That frozen expression of him as he held a dagger at Sagara Yoshiharu's neck.

Zenki who was supposed to come down from the cliff.. .. was missing.

Looks like he ran after seeing the result.

Or he was defeated by the shikigami army and disappeared....

Originally, he is a high level shikigami, but his "Ki" is too weak.

Maybe he spent it on maintaining his human body.

"No matter what, it seems like I'm the victor. As long as I have the head of this Saru, I don't care about these puny soldiers. It's too troublesome, let them escape."

At this moment, Hanzou answered.

"I understand. I will take my last wages to destroy Sagara Yoshiharu's body!"

Part 8

Before this, before Yoshiharu launched the final battle with the Shikigami army.

Nobuna had also started on her journey.

Sagara Yoshiharu, must have already....

The pounding of her heart.

Even during the time when Father passed away, it wasn't that painful.

Father passed away from sickness.

And the reason why Yoshiharu died was....

And.

Nobuna had sworn not to cry again.

Rather than dying from protecting those who should be protected, the one living on should... The one whose lives had been entrusted to, after going through a long period of sobbing, pain, even suffering, those can't be endured.

"If I die at this moment, Saru's death will no longer hold any meaning. No, Saru is still living. Yes. Manchiyo and the rest had already prepared retreat paths while retreating themselves... And there is such a clever Juubei there too.... I believe, I believe that he is living right now! "

Near the streets of Wakasa, on the mountain paths that Nobuna took to go to Kyoto, for the first time in her life,

while she is riding, she crossed her hands and lowered her head, praying to God or Buddha, the deities she wasn't even sure existed.

The tears that had been shed at the burial, the memories of the monks praying, all of those were so detestable.

But now, she had become less selfish and less self-centered.

It's not far now, from Kyoto.

Now, she had almost reached Kyoto.

With lightning speed that no one had expected, Oda Nobuna had returned.

Oda Nobuna died? Shikoku's Miyoshi three will definitely launch another attack on Kyoto upon hearing the news. And the Kouga who had been hidden till now and the Rokoku Yoshitaka who was planning to rise again.

And, the Asai Asakura army who believes that there are no more obstacles ahead of them from capturing Kyoto.

With this, I can greatly diminish their strength.

It is almost confirmed.

As long as there was still a female warrior like Oda Nobuna, the Oda army would rise again.

For this ambition, Nobuna had given up.

Given up that dream.

That, seemingly unattainable dream.

Even so.

She did not cry.

Always wearing a smile.

To make her body a little lighter, she had even stripped off her armor and had ridden the horse with just robes.

Even so, there was still a thing that she couldn't abandon no matter what.

In her chest, the gift that Yoshiharu gave her... The future namban clock, Nobuna held it tightly in her hand.

"Riku! Where are we?"

"Hime-sama, we are now at the western side of Mount Hiei! Once we pass this, Kyoto is right ahead!"

Katsuie squinted her eyes and said.

The long night had finally changed to light.

"Ok. Inuchiyo, Danjo. Now we don't have to worry about whether the horse can take it or not. Full speed ahead!"

".....Roger."

"Roger"

At the other side of the mountain peak, the scenery that was before them is the Kyoto castle.

"I'm still alive. You gave me this life. I'm waiting for you, Saru."

Nobuna's horses were standing at the foremost of the troops.

At this moment.

From the two sides of the mountain path filled with thick forests, a gunshot sound suddenly rang out.

A shot.

And then.

Another shot.

Though it's detestable, but Nobuna felt something had pierce her soft belly.

At this moment, the small body of Nobuna had already...

From her horse, she had fallen down.

Violently, the senses she got from the body had disappeared.

".....So...Sorry, Yoshiharu....."

Her eyes were full of..... tears.

Translator Notes

1. ↑ Li Keyong (李) was a Chinese Emperor during the late Tang Dynasty, also known as Emperor Wu ().
2. ↑ Sutegamari (捨) a 'fighting retreat', where the main army fights until a certain number of men died holding a position and repelling an attack before actually retreating.

~Translator's Notice: For more info on updates, please visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/OdaNobunaLN.Eng/

This is a rough translation from the chinese raws we have. It is still under work and there will be lots of edits in the near future as I care more about bringing to readers the story rather then the correct use of vocab and grammar. If any readers have inputs and want to edit, please do so.

~Tarmade~

Chapter 2 : Finely Hidden

Part 1

Dawn, Kyoto.

"The Oda army has retreated back to Kyoto from Echizen in shame."

"Sagara Yoshiharu who was leading the troops at the back has not returned."

"Though Oda Nobuna has abandoned Yoshiharu and escaped towards Kyoto, she was still sniped at Mount Hiei and has suffered serious injuries."

Kyoto was in an uproar as a multitude of rumors flew about.

Nene was still waiting for Yoshiharu's return at Myoukaku Temple.

But, Yoshiharu did not return.

Hanbei, her trustworthy companion, was still unconscious.

"Nobuna-sama is ok, and is currently recuperating at Honnou temple."

Nene who had heard of the rumors ran towards Honnou temple barefooted.

The soldiers on patrol found her and after getting the permission of Niwa Nagahide, she entered the inner areas of Honnou temple.

"Niwa-sama, Onii-sama has not returned yet?"

"There isn't any news yet, Nene-dono."

"But, didn't the Oda army retreat safely thanks to Niwa-sama and the rest? Isn't now the time to save Onii-sama!?"

"Umm.... Because things have become troublesome, the current situation is just 1 point."

"Troublesome?"

"After hearing that the Oda army is currently in a perilous state, the Miyoshi three who were supposed to have fled to Shikoku have gathered once more. Also, Rokoku Yoshitaka, who was hiding in Kouga has risen

again at southern Omi. What is the most troubling is, the Asai-Asakura allied forces are nearing Kyoto."

"But if that's the case, Onii-sama can't see Hime-sama, right? If we plead with Hime-sama directly, she will..."

"That.... I'm afraid it's impossible, Nene-dono."

Nagahide brought Nene to Nobuna's room,

But, there wasn't a highly spirited and energetic Nobuna in the room like always.

The tiger skin, globe and the namban telescope had all disappeared.

What had replaced all of them was a single mattress.

"Hime-sama!?"

Nobuna was lying on it.

Her abdomen had several layers of dressing, but the cloth had already been dyed a dark red with her blood, scaring Nene.

"Uhh....Uhh....:

The portions of Nobuna’s body that could be seen were covered in sweat, showing how frail she currently was.

She didn’t seem to be conscious either.

At Nobuna's side was the renowned doctor, Manase Belchior in a white robe.

"Ohh, this is a battlefield, don't let small children come in."

"...Ahh...Ahh...Hime-sama...Hime-sama was... was really sniped....?"

Nene collapsed onto the tatami, her voice... was already mixed with sounds of crying.

"Shots to the abdomen, 2 shots, it's already a miracle that she managed to live through it. In fact, if this were anyone but Nobuna-chan, this amount of blood loss would have killed them. Nobuna-chan has an extraordinary will."

"Shots!?"

"I have already performed a namban style surgery to remove the bullets in her body. If the bullets had penetrated the intestines, even I couldn't have done anything... It was due to this thing that she managed to survive the shots."

Manase Belchior took the spoilt namban clock for Nene to see.

"This is... Onii-sama's....."

"It's quite a weird looking thing."

"....Weird looking....thing..."

"After stripping off her armor during the retreat, Nobuna-sama still held onto this namban clock. She seemed to be unable to abandon Sagara-sama's weird looking clock. But then, miraculously, the 2 bullets hit this weird looking namban clock first. It's due to this that the bullets were greatly weakened and were unable to penetrate deep inside Nobuna-chan's body."

Nene was originally very angry when she was coming to see Nobuna, and had wanted to scold her.

In the end, you still abandoned Onii-sama, Hime-sama who once cherished Onii-sama..... is too heartless... But... Such anger had disappeared.

Nobuna did not abandon Yoshiharu heartlessly so she could escape.

But, it's because she understood Yoshiharu's intentions .

"....Hime-sama... Uhh...Uwahhhhhh."

Niwa Nagahide held on to Nene's back gently while she grabbed onto Nobuna's hand. While weeping, she said,

"Hime-sama is currently facing her most dangerous period. The initial danger has passed safely due to Manase-sama's surgery, but, due to the blood loss, she can't recover her strength right now..."

"....Uhh..Uhh...Niwa-sama, you mean, there is no way to send reinforcements to save Onii-sama?"

"It can't be done, I'm afraid it is most critical that Hime-sama rest these next two days. It's still unknown if Nobusumi-sama at Odani castle managed to escape the

pursuit of the Asai clan; he is currently missing, as far as we know. The Oda clan is currently facing the risk of total annihilation."

"But, But, if this goes on, Onii-sama will.....!"

"I know, but, we can't do such a thing right now. The Asai-Asakura allied forces are moving towards Kyoto through the western Omi streets of Lake Biwa in great speed. Nene-dono, if we give up on guarding Kyoto right now, Sagara-sama's sacrifice to let us retreat from Kanegasaki will become meaningless. 0 points."

Nagahide lowered her head.

Manase shook his head and said, "Though Nobuna has extraordinary will, it seems that her heart's wounds are even greater than her body's. After the surgery, her condition became even worse suddenly. If this goes on.... "

"You mean... Hime-sama might not last through this..... ?"

"The only one who can really save her is her own will to ‘live on’, Nagahide-sama. We doctors aren't magicians. There is a limit to what medical knowledge can do. What

we can do is to give the strength to live to those who want to keep living. But somehow, Nobuna-chan is slowly losing the desire to live... If this goes on, she will just become weaker and weaker. To think that the spirited Nobuna-chan can become like this; how unbelievable."

Nagahide found herself at a loss for words.

Just where have things gone wrong? If this continues on, Sagara-sama's sacrifice... No, we can't yet say that Sagara-sama has sacrificed himself, though he is most likely dead. But won't his death become meaningless?

Holding onto Nene's shaking back, Nagahide wiped the sweat from Nobuna's forehead.

"Nene-dono, Manase-sama, Hime-sama seems to be mumbling something."

Nagahide's ears edged nearer to Nobuna's pale lips.

"....Run....Saru...Hurry up and run...."

Just what kind of nightmare was Nobuna having... To mumbling such a thing...

Repeatedly...

"Yoshiharu...I'm sorry..."

On Nobuna's anguished face lay a streak of tears.

"I see, Nobuna-sama is trapped in the nightmare of Yoshiharu-sama dying in the battlefield, and has slowly lost the will to live."

"Manase-sama, what can we do? I... Just what can I do? "

"From now on, this isn't what I can do with my medical skills. Nagahide-sama, have you decided on something?"

"For me, reversing such an overwhelmingly disadvantageous situation is just too.... It's at this critical period that we need the smart and cunning Hanbei-sama , but she is still unconscious..."

"Calm down, Nagahide-sama. If even you give up now , then all will be finished."

Niwa Nagahide was always composed and calm. If her master needed advice, then without doubt she was the

first person anyone would think of, a pillar of support that the Oda clan cannot do without, but she wasn't remarkable in terms of strategies or planning.

The courageous Shibata Katsuie in comparison only knew how to move forward and push on. In the current situation, after witnessing the tragedy of Nobuna and Yoshiharu, if she were to be given command of the troops, she would most likely become furious and lead the Oda army for a straight on battle with the Asai-Asakura allied forces. If that's the case, the Oda army would quickly be eliminated under the combined forces of the Asai and Asakura clans.

No, to Nagahide, what she truly wanted to do now was lead the whole army to help Yoshiharu. Even if they lost Kyoto, or even the whole Oda army, she must still save Yoshiharu. Only he would give Nobuna the hope to keep on living.

But... if she really did this, the chances of success were seemingly... 0 points. Nagahide, a woman who wouldn't lose her wits no matter what, could only see such a result .

Both Nagahide and Katsuie shined in the sengoku era because of Nobuna. But right now, Nobuna, and the whole Oda clan were hanging by a thread, and were forced into a corner...

"God-sama, Buddha-sama, Neko-sama, anyone, please save Nobuna-sama and Onii-sama!!"

Nene splashes the water from the well on herself, starting the cleansing for the prayer.

She wanted to take up a spear and rush to the battlefield.

But, that was impossible for the young Nene.

So at least, at least praying... What she could do right now was to devote her wishes to the prayers for the gods .

Nagahide said, "Nene-dono, you will catch a cold" and tried to stop her, but Nene seemed to not feel the cold from the winter waters and was splashing herself with shocking determination.

Being moved by Nene's determination,

Wasn't just Nagahide herself.

"Niwa-sama and Shibata-sama, please lead the troops to protect Kyoto. I, Juubei Mitsuhide, will go by myself to Omi and save Sagara-senpai shortly."

".....Inuchiyo, is going too. The wilderness, I'm used to it."

"M...M...Me...Me too."

Other than her wild forehead, the otherwise perfect bishoujo, Akechi Mitsuhide,

Small figure and wearing a tiger skin, Maeda Inuchiyo,

and, Matsudaira Motoyasu, the bespectacled girl wearing Tanuki ears, decided while she was slightly shivering.

The three of them who had just managed to return to Kyoto from the "Retreat of Kanegasaki" had all asked Nagahide for permission.

"But, with just you guys... The possibility of you dying is extremely high. It should be a ninja's job to sneak in for any rescue mission. 20 points."

Nagahide put on a troubled expression.

Without a doubt, if she could have done it, Nagahide would have sent ninjas long ago, but Goemon had been sent to Omi and had not returned, Hattori Hanzou who was serving Matsudaira Motoyasu was moving with Yoshiharu; in the end, there weren't any ninjas to send.

"Anything is good, but if we continue to not do anything, we won't be able to help Nobuna-sama. And, this smart Mitsuhide made a mistake when lending those arquebus to Sagara-senpai."

"What is it, Akechi-sama?"

"Um... That..." Mitsuhide broke out in a sweat and seemed unable to mutter anything, her speech hesitating.

"....Um... When lending those arquebus, I had forgotten to lend any soldiers that were trained to use those arquebus to Sagara-senpai... If this goes on, I, Mitsuhide, can't sleep in peace. I will see the ghost of Sagara-senpai floating around me every time I lie down... .."

"This is just.... 30 points." Nagahide said.

"But, Hime-sama had once revealed to me that if she had some mishap, Akechi-dono will be the one to succeed her ambition. Katsuie and I respected such a decision from Hime-sama. If Akechi-dono met with some accident right now, who will succeed the ambition of unifying the world?"

"No, compared to my life, Nobuna-sama's life is a thousand times more important! I, Mitsuhide, though I am an eloquent genius descended of the esteemed Toki Genji, and I possess perfect looks, even I understand that I can't be compared to her in terms of capabilities! Without Nobuna-sama, there is no way to talk about unifying the world!"

".....Understood." Nagahide relented.

Mitsuhide, who would be able to succeed the Oda clan even if she did not do anything, (Though she was a bit too boastful) displayed loyalty by not caring about her own life while saving Nobuna and Yoshiharu. Nagahide cannot reject such a decision.

What she could do right now was guard Kyo until Nobuna wakes up. At such a situation when she needed to do something yet was unable to move, "Guarding" was

a much more important and difficult responsibility compared to moving out. Such a responsibility had to be shouldered by someone, and the only one capable of doing it was herself.

".....Inuchiyo, is going anyway. Stopping is useless, if you stop me, I'm cutting you down."

"Inuchiyo-dono, I have never thought of stopping you. ..... But Matsudaira Motoyasu-dono, you are the ally of Hime-sama, but right now, if you continue to stand by the Oda clan, I'm afraid Mikawa will....."

"I'm indebted to Saruyoshi-sama. And, if I can save Kichi-nee-san, I am willing to bet on this last possibility and lend all of the Mikawa troops to Mitsuhide-sama."

Though her tanuki ears were shivering non-stop, Matsudaira Motoyasu had made her decision.

Nagahide can't help but think, though Matsudaira Motoyasu was normally clumsy, kinda dumb and a little evil, once she had decided on something, she would become unbelievably stubborn, just like the specialty of the Mikawa army. In one way, Motoyasu was the type that is able to display her strengths the more she is under a critical situation. But in comparison, during peaceful

times she hardly thinks anything through and ends up just an ordinary brat....

This is really a big gamble, I've decided. I will carry all of this responsibility.

"....I understand, go and save Sagara-sama. Remember to not go too far in, and please come back alive."

"Roger!"

After the trio met with Nene, who was still splashing herself with water in prayer, and promised "We will save your brother," they disappeared towards the mountain path going into Omi.

After miraculously retreating to Kyoto with the Oda clan seemingly uninjured, Mitsuhide, Inuchiyo and Motoyasu dived onto the rescue mission without rest.

At this time, the back troops that Yoshiharu was leading had yet to start their final stand with Tsuchimikado at the Wakasa's dragon hole.

Part 2

The season had shifted completely into winter now.

The mountains were full of fallen leaves.

During the journey, as they were riding towards Mount Hiei, Inuchiyo said with a look of anguish, "It's around here."

"....If it's a normal sniper aiming for Hime-sama, it's impossible to shoot 2 shots on a target moving at high speed. I'm afraid the sniper is Sugitani Zenjuubou."

"Kouga's assassin... Ninja..."

"Inuchiyo-sama, after his attack, what happened to Sugitani Zenjuubou?"

".....It's regrettable, but he ran away. I was careless and lost sight of him..."

"This is difficult, there aren't many places to run to near here."

"He must have run into the mountains and hidden." Motoyasu said.

"From the name, Sugitani Zenjuubou should be a monk, or had some kind of relationship with Mount

Hiei's monks, or... We have to consider the possibility that the whole Mount Hiei has already become Kichi-nee-san's enemy~."

Mitsuhide was sceptical, and retorted "The head of Mount Hiei, tendaizasu-sama, is the elder brother of Himiko-sama. Nobuna-sama should be their friend after donating large amounts of money; it shouldn't be possible for them to be enemies."

"But because tendaizasu-sama isn't at Mount Hiei himself, the actual leader of Mount Hiei might be against Nobuna..."

"If that's the case, the mystery of how Sugitani Zenjuubou suddenly disappeared is cleared..." Inuchiyo said.

"Wh..Wh...Wh...Why!? Why is Mount Hiei against Nobuna-sama? Even this smart Juubei Mitsuhide can not understand this!"

"....This ancient spiritual mountain is a holy ground for secret sects and practitioners who have for a long time forbidden women from entering holy sites, such as Mount Fuji, Mount Shiro, Mount Koya and Mount Hiei. Maybe, there are monks in Mount Hiei that are

displeased with the female Kichi-nee-san ruling the world."

Mitsuhide snorted, "Ignorant. This rule that forbids women in Buddhist teachings, just what is unclean about girls?"

"Most likely, it's because it will affect their practicing in the mountains. If there are cute girls in front of them, their abstinence will become much harder, especially for those young monks~"

".....The practitioners have been passing rumors among themselves that once they can't practice abstinence, they will lose their powers."

"What an unreasonable thing to say! It's those guys' own fault they're troubled by just seeing girls!"

".....But, maybe Yoshiharu should do some practicing on abstinence."

Motoyasu laughed, "It's true, that Saruyoshi-sama could definitely be better off after practicing that."

"Nono, if you take away his perverseness from him, he will definitely shrivel and rot somewhere. The reason

why Sagara-senpai has been able to survive till now is because of his extraordinary perverseness. It's not too much to say that he lives on solely due to the immense strength of his perverseness."

"You have a point. Because Kichi-nee-san and so many other girls are waiting for him, and he had the promise of 'If I live, let me kiss you' with her, so....."

"Geez, just how perverted can he be, that Gorilla fellow!"

"Saruyoshi-sama is definitely... still living~"

"....Yes, still living."

"That idiot will definitely surpass all trials to go back to Nobuna-sama's side!"

The trio finished their conversation and continued on silently.

After this, they must ask Mount Hiei to hand over that villain, Sugitani Zenjuubou.

But, the opponent was an entire spiritual mountain that prohibited women, and the monks in Mount Hiei were mostly militarized monks.

Mount Hiei, having the double protection of being a spiritual mountain and a place to practice Buddhist teachings, had become sort of an independent empire near Kyoto. Generations of Ashikaga shoguns couldn't do anything about it and had been troubled by this.

Because they prohibit females from entering, the Oda clan, which was comprised mostly of female generals, would have lots of difficulty negotiating with Mount Hiei.

But now, the first and foremost matter on hand was to save Sagara Yoshiharu.

The trio followed Nagahide's instructions and rode along the retreat path that she had build for Yoshiharu.

Hidden along the path were horses and supplies, and though they were meant for Yoshiharu and his troops, by using some of them the trio was able to move more quickly than expected.

On the way, they did encounter some small squads hunting for escaped warriors, but the trio’s priority was to save Yoshiharu, so they chose to hide from them.

But, there wasn't any sight of Yoshiharu anywhere.

The blurred Kuchiki Shinano reported to them that no one had passed by. While Shinano laughed weirdly, "The back troops might be near the edge of Wakasa, near Mizusaka ridge, ahahaha.", he lent a precise map to the trio.

What a weird man... Mitsuhide and the other two had a strange feeling about him, but there wasn't any time to dig deeper.

Though his actions are weird, Shinano is undoubtedly loyal to the Oda clan.

They continued on, and at last they reached the top of Mizusaka ridge.

In the valley of Wakasa, Yoshiharu’s seriously injured and scattered back troops were having a fierce battle with Asakura's Tsuchimikado. "There! Everyone is battling! Ahh geez, why didn't they use the arquebus?"

"...The opponent is the hideous shikigami army flying in the air."

"Now! Sagara-senpai is attacked by some strange enemy! He is really as disgusting as before, Sagara-senpai! Ahahahaha!"

At the last moment, Mitsuhide and the other two had reached him.

Yoshiharu had lived on miraculously.

Just as Yoshiharu's life was like the embers of a dying candle flame, Mitsuhide and the rest had reached him.

In the battle, the enemy's shikigami army held an overwhelming advantage.

The trio suddenly saw Hattori Hanzou appear and release a smokescreen.

Mitsuhide grasped her arquebus shouted, "I heard shikigamis are terrifying! Right now, let's rush into the valley!"

"Bring Saruyoshi-sama to the retreat path that we had prepared and run~"

".....Inuchiyo, moving out!"

At this time,

The trio had believed.

Like this, Yoshiharu and Nobuna, both of them could be saved.

But,

At that instant that they felt lucky, the odds turned on them...

At the short amount of time the trio needed to rush down to the valley, fate had revealed her cruel smile to the three of them.

"It seems like it's over."

A young omyouji's silhouette appeared in the narrow valley.

That guy waved the fan in his hand lightly.

In an instant, the smokescreen that Hanzou had opened up disappeared like it never existed in the first place.

Mitsuhide and the others saw it.

Every living soldier in the back troops had been pinned to the ground by the shikigamis.

The blood soaked Hattori Hanzou.

And, with a seemingly frozen expression and a dagger held up to his neck, Sagara Yoshiharu.

Zenki, who was asked by Hanbei to "Protect Yoshiharu-sama"... had also disappeared.

Maybe he had been defeated by the shikigami army and vanished...

An arrogant smile slowly spouted on the young omyouji's face, as he proclaimed, "Seems like I'm the victor. As long as I have the head of this Saru, I don't care about these dirty soldiers. Since it's too troublesome, scram."

Then, Hanzou said,

"Understood, let us use our last bomb to send Sagara-sama on his way!"

After doing a hand sign, Hanzou disappeared into a bunch of falling leaves as Yoshiharu shouted, "Bastard, I've said it! I will use my life in exchange for all the lives here! But, it's too shameful for my head to be removed and displayed to others! I will definitely not give you my head! The way I die, I will choose it myself!"

After that, all the shikigamis rushed towards Yoshiharu.

And, suddenly,

There was a big explosion.

Sagara Yoshiharu had exploded into a million pieces.

Spreading out, Yoshiharu, or it should be Yoshiharu's pieces, were falling like rain droplets onto the ground.

And Mitsuhide, after seeing such a scene...

"....Uwahh....UWAHHHHHHHH.....!?"

In Mitsuhide's heart, something seems to have broken apart.

Kill.

Kill...

KILL....

I'LL KILL YOU.....!

Drawing out the arquesbus on her back, she aimed and shot at the young omyouji.

The low level shikigamis were frightened by the gunshot, exclaiming "There's still an arquebus?" and fleeing in all directions.

The omyouji, who still acted like a child, calmly said, " Ara ara, it's boring to have blown yourself into pieces. As expected, no human can understand what monkeys are thinking." He threw a talisman in his hand to block the bullet from Juubei, revealing a smile as cold as a vampire's.

"I don't particularly wish to uphold a promise with that ninja and Saru, but my mood is exceedingly good

now, and I've accomplished my objective in killing the Oda clan's Sagara Yoshiharu. So, scram as you wish; I will avert my eyes this time round, but if anyone dares to come here and irritate me, I'll kill."

Behind him, a shikigamis with the wings like a dragon appeared and the young omyouji flew up into the sky.

"Who is running! I'll kill you... I'LL DEFINITELY KILL YOU....!"

Mitsuhide rushed forwards alone, towards the omyouji flying in the air.

Her eyes had become bright red as her blood rushed to her head.

Her brain was totally black.

"N....No! There are definitely traps in front... Wait~!"

Motoyasu wanted to stop her, but she didn't make it in time.

The ground in front of Mitsuhide trembled to reveal a large crack. The crack was deep, like an opening into hell .

But,

Mitsuhide, who had lost all reasoning, could only see the omyouji flying in front of her.

To tear apart this enemy, this omyouji who forced Yoshiharu to his death; this was the only thought in Mitsuhide's mind.

No, in actual fact, she was no longer thinking about anything.

Mitsuhide's body had succumbed to immense fury.

With her horse, Mitsuhide fell into the deep crack in the ground.

"Ah, ahhhh... Ho....How did things become.... Sar... Saruyoshi-sama and Mitsuhide-sama.... How did things become like this?"

They could no longer see Mitsuhide anymore.

The crack was like an enormous monster's mouth, waiting to swallow everything.

Falling into such a crack, there wasn't any way...

Just like this, Motoyasu and Inuchiyo stood there in a daze.

On their sides were the back troops, all covered in injuries.

"Uwahhhh! I'm so sorry, commander... Sorry....!"

"....Commander... Why must you sacrifice yourself for soldiers like us!"

"With this... he can't meet Oda's Hime-sama anymore... ..."

Not one soldier, at present, was happy that he had survived.

Inuchiyo silently bent her body, wanting to collect the pieces of Yoshiharu's corpses.

But, just when she touched it, the meat pieces disappeared like sand blown by the wind.

"Hanzou, what is this? I had ordered you to protect Saruyoshi-sama~!"

Motoyasu was crying while scolding Hattori Hanzou who had reappeared quietly and kneeled in front of her.

But, Hanzou said without a change in expression, " After hearing such a loud explosion, the nearby squads who are hunting for escaping warriors will soon gather here. If we don't retreat right now, we will be eliminated. "

"ANSWER ME, HANZOU!"

"'If we were forced into a corner by Tsuchimikado's shikigami army, use my life to save the others.' That is what Sagara-dono decided with his own will at the final moments."

"But, if that's the case.....!"

"In this situation where Hime brought so few aides with her and came to the frontline without any sort of backup, the mission that we of the Hattori faction have right now is to send Hime-sama back to Kyoto using any means possible."

"Hanzou? But at least, at least Mitsuhide-sama, if we don't go and save...."

"The strength of Tsuchimikado is terrifying, even if there is a miracle, that child won't be unscathed. And, to us Hattori faction, Hime-sama's life is more important than anything else."

Hattori Hanzou was indeed a cold, cruel man.

Without any hesitation, he proclaimed, "We are not the retainers of the Oda clan, but we serve Hime-sama. The mission to protect Sagara Yoshiharu ends here. Now, we will begin to escort our master, Hime-sama back to Kyoto ."

Part 3

In an instant, the situation had changed.

At the shores of Lake Biwa, along the narrow streets of western Omi, the armies of the Asai and Asakura clans were moving forwards, an estimated 35000 strong.

The allied forces were nearing Kyo.

The Oda side had no time to wait for Nobuna to wake up. With Niwa Nagahide and Shibata Katsuie leading a 25000 strong army, they marched out to face their enemy.

During the retreat at Echizen, though the back troops that Sagara Yoshiharu led had absorbed most of the enemy's attack to prevent their total annihilation, they still did lose an amount of soldiers.

The commander of the army was Oda clan's strongest member, the chief, Shibata Katsuie.

At her side, advising her was Niwa Nagahide.

While the two of them were moving forwards, they were discussing strategies.

"I...I...I...I... d...do...don...don't know what to do!? No matter what, forward! Yeah!"

"Katsuie-dono, isn't the place to battle at Sakamoto?"

"Sa...Sakamoto?"

"An important location at the eastern side of Mount Hiei, if Sakamoto is conquered, Kyoto will just be a straight line for them. If we are forced to retreat back to Kyoto, it will mean our defeat."

Nagahide explained the geographical situation of Sakamoto to Katsuie, but Katsuie kept shaking her head.

"A...An...Anyway, in my dictionary, there is only forwards! Using speed to attack them all at once! Especially Asai Hisamasa who betrayed Hime-sama, I will kill him myself! .....but, is it really okay for me to be the commander, Nagahide?"

"Yeah, we can't afford a tardy battle. If we are dragged into a prolonged battle, Kouga's Rokoku and anti-Nobuna forces everywhere will all move, Katsuie-dono. 90 points."

"Ahhh, this is the first time I had such high points from Nagahide, don't worry! Look, Nagahide, Shibata Katsuie will turn into a demon to take revenge for Hime-sama!"

"Hmmm, I'm looking forward to it."

This battle was a battle to give righteous punishment to that despicable traitor, Asai Hisamasa, who had broken the pact. Only this time, the morale of “Japan’s weakest”, the Owari troops, was abnormally high.

The soldiers had not known of the sniping of Nobuna... But losing the respected "Nobuna-sama's Saru" pushed their fury to indescribable levels.

But, Katsuie and Nagahide who were traveling towards Sakamoto received shocking news from the scouts.

"The Asai Asakura allied forces ignored Sakamoto and have climbed Mount Hiei."

"Wh...What is this, Mount Hiei!? ....Nagahide, what is going on here!? I...I do not understand the reason behind this, uwahhh...."

"Looks like there is someone smart in the enemy ranks. To form their formations at Mount Hiei, they want to drag this battle out."

"So as to say....?"

"If this goes on, we will have to surround Mount Hiei, and the situation will stagnate. As time passes, the Oda army will face greater risks of being attacked by Rokoku at southern Omi or Kyoto being captured by the Miyoshi clan. But if we gave up on Mount Hiei and retreat, the allied forces will attack our army from behind as we are retreating."

"Wa...Wait! I understand that it is very disadvantageous for us if we gave up the protection of

Kyoto and get trapped here, but why has Mount Hiei become our enemy!? Did we do something to provoke Mount Hiei!?"

"Not sure. The timing that the Asai and Asakura clans allied with each other is just too good, and the betrayal of Asai Hisamasa was not noticed even by his own son, Nagamasa-sama. I'm afraid that someone is pulling the strings behind the scenes....."

As the Oda clan had lost their target, they pitched camp at Sakamoto.

Before, it was the Oda clan retreating from Kanegasaki , but now it was the allied forces escaping into Mount Hiei.

The Oda army, previously supported by their mindset of vengeance, had reached their limits. The soldiers were all exhausted, both physically and mentally.

But, at that moment, there was yet another unexpected event.

"Wahahaha! I'm a priest from Mount Hiei, Shoukakuin's Gousei-sama! Thinking of Tenka Fubu when you are all girls, let me teach you gals a lesson!"

From the forests of Mount Hiei, suddenly and without notice, there were a lot of monks attacking them.

The heavily built leader was waving an iron rod in his hands without stopping.

The Oda army who was pitching camp was caught unaware and plunged into confusion.

"Katsuie-dono, now is the time to display your courage!"

"I understand! Let's battle it out! To Shoukakuin!"

Shibata Katsuie rode into the enemy's formation single handedly, knocking away masses of monks as she rushed towards Shoukakuin.

Even the monks of Mount Hiei seemed unable to stop the invincible Shibata Katsuie as she shouted, "Where have we offended you guys in the past? I will now accept the heads of you monks, eat this! Ultimate skill, slash of broken vases!"

The aide who followed closely behind threw a huge vase at Katsuie. Katsuie swung her long spear and hit the vase.

With a shattering sound, the broken pieces of the vase shot out in all directions.

"Ahh!"

"Uwahh!"

"Hmm, you're capable, lass!"

The monks who were hit on their heads or body fell down one by one.

Katsuie opened up a bloody path towards Shoukakuin's commander.

As expected from Oda clan's strongest warrior, the invincible Shibata Katsuie. This was actually the first time that skill had been used in battle, but whether due to her great experience and practice beforehand or the fury that Katsuie was feeling now, the effect of this skill was remarkable.

"Enough! Shoukakuin, have a fair fight with me!"

"Hmph, to fight with an unclean female warrior, I will get punished by Buddha-sama. But since you had come all this way, let me play along with you, Uwahahahaha!"

Shoukakuin Gousei waved the iron rod in his hand and rushed towards Katsuie.

The spear and rod collided multiple times. though in terms of strength Shoukakuin Gousei held the advantage , Katsuie, who was on horseback to augment her remarkable spear skills, overwhelmed her opponent as she gradually closed in.

"Ahhhhh~! I'm the Oda clan's Shibata demon! Shoukakuin, prepare youself!"

"What is this strength, you, don't tell me you're actually a guy? Such power, you must be a guy!"

"Eh!? ...to say something so rude!"

We can win~! As expected from Katsuie-sama who is stronger than even men! At first, the soldiers who were shattered by the ambush had lost their courage, but after witnessing Katsuie's battle their morale had returned.

"Uhh, haha, my true mission is the protection of Mount Hiei. I won't play with you anymore, lass, let's end it here today."

Shoukakuin Gousei turned his back to Katsuie, gathered the remaining monks and retreated.

Though defeated, they were not confused. As expected from the monks at Mount Hiei.

But Katsuie had fallen into a frenzy.

"Wait! The duel had just begun and you are running already!? YOU COWARD!"

"Wahahaha! If you can't take it down, try and chase us down! But if you enter the holy Mount Hiei and began battling with us monks, it won't be enough with just you female generals!"

"Damn it! All forces, chase that bastard monk and attack Mount Hiei!" Katsuie responded, provoked by Gousei to swing her spear and pursue, but Nagahide stopped her.

"Wa...Wait, Katsuie-dono! Mount Hiei is a famous mountain that protects Kyoto's gate of demons! The main temple worships the ‘Holy Flame’ that has not been extinguished since the temples were built. People believe that if the fires of the ‘Holy Flame’ are extinguished, the spiritual power to seal the gate of demons will disappear and Kyoto will be besieged with disasters! It is bad if we just attacked like this! And Mount Hiei is a holy mountain that prohibits females from entering, let alone attacking; you and I aren't even allowed to enter."

"Eh~!? They prohibit females from entering? What is that?"

"Their reasons are from religious teachings, and also, there are scholars who think there are ancient rules that have existed long before Buddhism came about."

"So as to say, I can't attack our enemies on Mount Hiei, yet I can't remove our siege of Mount Hiei!?"

"Hmmm, we can't move whatsoever... 2 points."

"Ohhhhh. Bastard Shoukakuin, you ask for it yet you don't dare to battle it out fairly in a duel, running into a safe place that prohibits females from entering. Just... Just what kind of a bastard are you!?"

Katsuie and Nagahide stood and watched the more than 850 foot Mount Hiei in a daze, worrying in their hearts about the gradually darkening fate of the Oda clan .

At that time, Oda Nobuna, who was unconscious at Hounou temple, still had not woken up.

Part 4

Mount Hiei.

Main temple's hall.

There were 3 guys sitting in front of the "Holy Flame".

"....I didn't think that we would begin our battle with a turtle style, or that Oda Nobuna would not yet have died . According to our plan, shouldn't we have won already? "

Hisamasa, inexperienced as he was in wars, had already turned pale.

"Is it really okay to betray the Oda clan? it will be all over if we are defeated by the Oda army." Hisamasa was plagued with unease.

In complete contrast to the panicking Hisamasa was a tall guy sitting calmly while sipping his tea.

His black hair wasn't tied up, but was at his back.

This man seemed around 30 years old.

Though he was very tall, his build wasn’t particularly muscular.

Rather, he looked well seasoned, his body like that of a wild cat.

At the same time, though he was on the battlefield, that man was wearing elegant clothes worn by Kyoto nobles.

"Hisamasa, the more we drag this out, the more advantageous it will be for us. A battle full of blood is hideous, and I despise letting female warriors bleed. A

beautiful fight that could be used to boast to the world should be one that is won not through waving swords and shedding blood... All we need to do is to relax and wait for the Oda clan to be destroyed themselves."

This man has a mix of elegance with a beautiful voice.

He was Echizen’s Daimyo, named Asakura Yoshikage.

The esteemed Asakura clan's 11th head.

Different from Asai Nagamasa who cross-dressed as a male, Asakura Yoshikage wasn't a beautiful type. Both his heart and body are 100% manly.

But, he had an extreme interest, an extremely frivolous character.

Because he was crazy about Kyoto's culture, he renamed Echizen's capital, "Ichijodani" to "Little Kyoto". The city's building style totally imitated Kyoto, and at the same time Yoshikage always carries a picture book titled "The tales of Genji[1]."

Asakura Yoshikage's interest in "Genji" wasn't just limited to picture books. The residence he lived in was build exactly like Hikaru Genji's annex house. At the

same time, he even asked the genius artist from the north , Hasegawa Touhaku, to draw paintings on his walls, ceilings and pillars. He had turned his whole house into a world of "Genji", and was immersed in it the whole day .

The esteemed sengoku daimyo's blood that came to the 11th generation had become such a frivolous fellow.

Such a man as Asakura Yoshikage has no interest in war.

This time, he reluctantly sent out forces because Nobuna attacked Echizen first, to quell the flames of war.

"It's true that there are still uncertainties, but by simply bringing our plan this far, we already have a firm chance of winning this war. A commander that keeps commanding his troops to battle, letting huge amounts of soldiers die due to wars is idiotic. As long as we have geographical and timing advantages, then victory will soon be ours."

Though he hates wars, once he went into one Yoshikage was a remarkable strategist.

"Once Oda Nobuna dies, give the position of the ruler of the world to my son, Nagamasa."

Hisamasa lowered his head deeply to the much younger Yoshikage.

"This can be done; I have no interest in troublesome things like ruling the world. I've heard that Nagamasa is an elite, so no matter if it's Kyoto or the world, I will leave them all to you. But, all the beautiful pieces of art in Kyoto are to be sent to my Ichijodani, because I do not wish to see the pieces of arts in Kyoto destroyed during the course of war."

This is Asakura Yoshikage's wish.

This man held zero interest in conquering the world.

Such a mundane thing can be left to the Asai clan who was closely related to the Asakura clan; such was Yoshikage's true wish.

And because of this, Yoshikage who had no ambition, nor even desired one, was able to see an even clearer battlefield.

The last of the 3 men.

"It's no good if the leader of the troops isn't a man! If a lass like Oda Nobuna is really able to conquer the world, I will be troubled. I will fully dedicate this Mount Hiei's forces to the two of you.

He was the heavily built monk that had just retreated from battling with the Oda army.

Shoukakuin Gousei was drinking his wine lavishly.

He was the leader of Mount Hiei's monk army.

Before Buddhism came, Mount Hiei was worshipped as a spiritual mountain. As it was a centre for training large amounts of Buddhist monks and spreading Buddhist cultures, it had thousands of battle ready monk groups at the same time, just like an independent state.

But there wouldn't be another guy like Shoukakuin, who was direct and frank without any pretense in the monk troops.

No killing? No alcohol? What was that? Swinging his metal rod in the battlefield and drinking wine was what he loved the most, alongside eating meat and borrowing

money, though once borrowed, he would never return the money. Once the Ashikaga shogunate wanted him to return their lent money, and Shoukakuin replied, "Want it? Talk to the metal rod in my hand." That was just the sort of outlaw he was.

And,

"To give the world to such a young lass, that is ridiculous! I'm disappointed at such a world now! Princess daimyo? Ha, they are just weak fellows who use their charm to lure men!"

Driven to fury by the world that had given birth to so many female warriors and grumbling, "Women will only shaken my resolve!", Shoukakuin hated female warriors. "Asai-sama, Asakura-sama, don't let these unclean women do whatever they like anymore. I had just crossed swords with those Oda brats, so their defenses are surely slackened now! We should launch a night assault now! Using the darkness of the night, we should attack Sakamoto with our full force! What? If we fail? All we need to do is to retreat back to Mount Hiei."

"What a bloodthirsty monk." Asakura Yoshikage laughed.

But the cautious Hisamasa had other worries.

"....But Yoshikage-sama, come December won't the path back to Echizen be sealed with huge amounts of snow?"

"The Oda army is much more anxious than I. In this battle, the Oda army will be the first to fall."

"Uhh...But, to face off with the enemy… Instead of doing nothing, how about we send out some assassins to kill the commanders of the Oda army? Especially that Shibata Katsuie that was able to face off with Gousei-sama; if we don't kill her....."

"Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide are both female warriors. They are nothing to fear, not to worry."

"Uwahahahaha, I will personally send Shibata Katsuie who had forgotten the roots of femininity to the heavens, but if it's about assassinations, I have an arquebus specalist, Sugitani Zenjuubou, who sniped Oda Nobuna as she escaped from Echizen."

Shoukakuin asked a young monk to bring Sugitani Zenjuubou, who was hiding in Mount Hiei after sniping Nobuna, over to the main hall.

Zenjuubou was the one who used Sagara Yoshiharu as bait to attempt to assassinate Nobuna, and after that had successfully shot 2 bullets at Nobuna, a merciless assassin.

But....

"....I can't take it anymore, leave me alone."

That Zenjuubou is now totally drunk, and was tumbling about in a fit.

"Oi, Zenjuubou, what happened to sniping Oda Nobuna and becoming the world's best sniper?"

"....I, failed to snipe that woman twice. World's best sniper...? My skills are useless, no, what's useless is me myself....."

Gousei laughed, "She was hit two times in her abdomen; even that Oda Nobuna couldn't escape death in the end. That must be Buddha's punishment towards her for trying to conquer the world."

"....I want to kill my prey with a single shot. Giving pain and suffering to a prey after shooting, it isn't my

style. Of course, I like seeing others suffering, but if I don't kill them at my first shot I can't be called the world's best."

"Oh? Then why did a sniper with such a killing style fail?"

Asakura Yoshikage, who was originally unconcerned about this topic, began to have an interest in what Zenjuubou is saying.

Maybe he wants to know more about the philosophy behind killers.

"....If I aimed at her head, she will definitely die, but I... can't take the shot."

"Oh? Can't take the shot? Why is that?"

Zenjuubou hugged his head with anguish and screamed, "....I don't know! ...I DON'T KNOW! ...That lass's smiling face is just too bright, I feel that an insect like me should never dirty her face.... Why, why did I have such a delusion... What happened to me, even I don't understand."

Asai Hisamasa couldn't help but fume, "If you had aimed at Oda Nobuna's head, we would already.....!" But, Asakura Yoshikage stopped him immediately, saying, " Don't say meaningless things anymore."

"So I shot her abdomen, 2 shots, it should have penetrated her intestines. But even so, that lass didn't die. .. Even I failed two times. That Oda Nobuna might really be blessed by the heavens....."

Listening to this, Gousei shook his head and said, " This man is useless now. Scram. I, Gousei, don't want such a useless subordinate that can't even hold an arquebus! You have been charmed by Oda Nobuna's looks!"

".... Don’t blame Sugitani Zenjuubou so harshly. It isn’t quite so evil a thing as you make it sound." Asakura Yoshikage laughed, while saying "This man does have a heart which loves elegance.", he opened the picture book of "The Tales of Genji."

"I understand[2]. If there is a piece of art of utmost beauty, it's normal to not be able to destroy it. Is Oda Nobuna really such a beauty that one can't look at her

directly? One even more ravishing than the princess in " The Tales of Genji"? I don't dare to believe in the possibility of such a woman existing in the real world... If she is really as pretty as Wakamurasaki from "Tales of Genji", then the sakuras of the northern mountains and I will be mesmerized by her... The young Wakamurasaki will cry at a pitiful young bird, if such a beauty from my dreams really exists in reality... Hohohoho.. Everyone, do you know about the fact that Wakamurasaki and Genji really met at the northern mountains? After collecting numerous pieces of information, I finally built concrete proof, and I think the mountain at the back of Kyoto is actually the northern mountain from Genji... What do you guys think?"

What an intriguing man. Compared to a living woman, he is much more interested in a princess from a story... Asai Hisamasa thought as he looked upon Yoshikage's fair looks.

"Through Genji, I, who had nothing but despair of the real world, have gained immense hope. Like Genji, who brought a cute girl who looks like his mother back to his annex house, turned her into his belonging, and then changed her as per his perferences... I have finally gotten a perfect girl like Wakamurasaki... Ohohohoh."

"Oh, Yoshikage-sama, it's time we stop this frivolous topic...."

"Yes yes, I had an interest just as Rokujou Miyasudokoro, who couldn't abandon the frivolous Genji that she hates, and like a ghost she caught girls one by one and killed them, all the time unable to transmit her feelings to Genji. I think Aoi who became gradually colder is really pretty too; Aoi suffering in her heart had pained me everytime I read. The young wife that Genji married in his later years, San no Miya would definitely like the Nekogami-sama that is all the rage nowadays. I dare say she would be extremely happy if she could come to this era when the people really worship Nekogami-sama with their hearts."

It seemed like once Asakura Yoshikage started on the topic of "The Tales of Genji", he won't listen to anyone else.

Asai Hisamasa and Shoukakuin Gousei had to stay silent and listen...

And then suddenly, someone that could interrupt Yoshikage's mumblings appeared.

"Asakura-sama, Asai-sama, Saru is dead. He has been blown to pieces. Even his head is nowhere to be found and, it is regrettable, but in place of Sugitani Zenjuubou, I have done it."

The white shota and Omyouji

Is Tsuchimikado Hisanaga.

With his numerous ugly and low level shikigamis, Tsuchimikado appeared in the main hall.

"As expected from Mount Hiei, I can feel extraordinary 'Ki'. The shikigamis are 10 times stronger here compared to Wakasa."

"Such a child is the head of Tsuchimikado clan? And you don't even have Saru's head, what use it that?" Asai Hisanaga who said that was suddenly embraced by a shikigami with wings and he instantly screamed, "Have mercy!!!"

"Saru's head was blown away by Hattori Hanzou's bomb, so I can't get it, uhhh..."

"I got it, hurry and get this monster away from me! Have mercy on me!"

"How about our promise, if the Oda clan was destroyed, we, the Tsuchimikado family will once again rise in Kyoto, and gather all the omyoujis around the country to revere me as the head. Don't tell me you have forgotten about that?"

"As you wish, if we can return to the era of omyoujis and shikigamis flying around in Kyoto, I will truly feel happy. Isn't it a good thing to envelop Kyoto in darkness again?"

Tsuchimikado laughed, "Asakura-sama is really understanding."

"Yes yes, I have killed that Akechi Mitsuhide too. That small lass that was staying at Asakura-sama's place for a while; the one with a wide forehead. This is fine, right?"

"....I see, that smart and elegant lass; if her forehead weren't that wide, she would be my Wakamurasaki..."

Though it was unknown if Oda Nobuna was alive or dead, it's a fact that she couldn't move right now.

The Oda clan's most tenacious advisors, Sagara Yoshiharu and Akechi Mitsuhide, were defeated by Tsuchimikado.

Saitou Dousan, who was protecting Mino and Owari with a small amount of troops was under the threat of Kouga's Rokoku and the eastern Takeda Shingen, and would be unable to help.

And Takigawa Kazumasu at Ise was held down by Rokoku's army too and couldn't move at all.

Though at first glance the Oda army appeared to have Mount Hiei surrounded, in actual fact, Oda was surrounded by numerous armies itself.

Shikoku's Miyoshi had appeared again. If one was to estimate the ideal time they would attack Kyoto, which was now an empty city...

"Two weeks. If we endure these two weeks of boring life, we can reverse the situation and victory will be ours. "

"Uwahaha, we can win, Asakura-sama? Shibata and Niwa are both female warriors. They can't take a step

onto Mount Hiei, so they can't even attack us. To have used Mount Hiei where women are prohibited from entering, as expected from the cunning strategist."

"I just hate to see girls getting wrapped up in war. To frivolous people, girls should be kept in the house, helping her change her clothes every night, being mesmerized by her beauty as we enjoy her thoroughly... Hohoho."

"It's kinda disgusting." Tsuchimikado, still a child, spurted out his true feelings accidentally, but Asakura Yoshikage said, "Another two weeks to return home, how troublesome. Mount Hiei is full of boring men. I should have brought Hasegawa Touhaku with me" and was in his own world again.

Part 5

Kyoto,

Hounou Temple.

Waiting room.

Nene was continuously asking the situation from Manase Belchior who was taking care of Nobuna. "Please tell me."

"They seem to have fallen into a situation where they can't move forwards or backwards at Mount Hiei, and there is apparently nothing they can do."

"Yoshiharu-sama or Mitsuhide-sama, one of them could have come up with a brilliant plan that shocks all of us."

"Where is the crafty Hanbei-sama?"

"She is sleeping now due to her medicine. I'm only telling you here, but Hanbei-chan's condition is unexpectedly serious, don't tell anyone about this."

"....Is that so....?"

"As for when will she wake up, we will have to see Hanbei-chan's strength and will."

"Uhhh... Everyone is important, yet Nene who is still a child can't do anything, how infuriating!"

"But you did do something. To cleanse yourself with cold water in such cold weather to pray for everyone, Nene-chan's feelings will definitely find their way to Yoshiharu-sama and Nobuna-sama."

"But Hime-sama... Hime-sama's condition now is.....!"

Manase Belchior lowered his head.

True, Nobuna looked much weaker now.

The surgery was perfect.

She had a fever, but the fever and the toxins in her body should disappear, and when the fever subsides, Nobuna would wake up.

But....

"Due to her high fever, I'm afraid Nobuna-sama is having nightmares. The human heart is mysterious. Because of these nightmares, at the same time her spirit weakens, her body condition will weaken too, and that brings along an even higher fever. So, she can't wake up no matter what. If this keeps repeating, and the situation goes on like this, I'm afraid Nobuna-sama will....."

"Please try your best no matter what! Isn't Manase-sama a renowned doctor that combined both namban and traditional medical skills!?"

"....The dream world isn't a place that medical skills can reach."

If her high fever didn't subside, not just remaining in a coma, Nobuna-sama can last another one to two days at most. His mind flashed through numerous patients dying, but, only this point, Manase Belchior who is like a scent could not bear to say it out to the young Nene whose eyes are already full of tears.

But, the intuitive Nene had already discovered.

"....Hime-sama already... already... can't be saved? Uhh , Uhh, if Onii-sama... Onii-sama could come back....!"

It was like they were in hell.

Inside Hounou temple, there was a deathly silence.

Suddenly, there was an unexpected guest.

"Hmmm, geezer, isn't it time that you guys need me?"

A body which emitted a "not of this country" atmosphere and a strong perfume.

A china styled attire worn over tanned skin with a long, thin tobacco pipe.

It was Matsunaga Danjo Hisahide, commonly known as the "Venomous Scorpion."

Hisahide, who hadn't been seen for quite some time, walked elegantly towards Manase Belchior.

"Ohh, Matsunaga-sama? Rumors are all over Kyoto about you running back to Yamato after Hime-sama was sniped, and that the Oda clan was doomed."

"Oh, that must be from those kids in Kyoto who dislike me. I was actually conjuring a secret drug for Nobuna-sama."

Manase began trembling all over at the sound of Hisahide's voice, and, pointing at her, he stammered out "Da..Da...Dan...Danjo-chan? Y...You... What are you doing here?"

In the past, the lecherous doctor Manase Belchior had once created illicit pictures of Matsunaga Hisahide.

At that time, Manase who wanted to seduce Matsunaga Hisahide was rejected with simply, "I hate geezers." and was given sulfur mustard poison and abandoned at Hisahide's castle, Tamon mountain castle.

To Manase, the event was traumatic enough to incite trembling whenever he thought of it to this day.

"I'm saying, Geezer, that by now you should’ve run out of ways to stop the illness from proceeding. Nobuna-sama is trapped in her nightmares and can't wake up, right?"

"You are correct, but to give Hime-sama drugs prescribed by Danjo-chan, the ‘Venemous Scorpion’... it's very suspicious, extremely suspicious."

"Not at all. There is a drug from Persia that is able to manipulate dreams. The materials are very difficult to gather here, so I was delayed."

"Ho... a drug that manipulates dreams! What is it, exactly?"

"If we use this, will Nobuna-sama be released from her nightmares?" Nene asked

"Yes, it will not only end her nightmares, but also give her sweet dreams, dreams of happiness that Nobuna-sama herself truly wants. Once Nobuna-sama's spirit becomes better, her temperature will drop and she will eventually wake up."

After listening, Nene held Hisahide's hands tightly and begged numerous times, "Please!"

"Nene-chan, those Persian drugs that this woman uses are actually poisons! They are things that are extremely toxic, and while they may have their uses, they can only do harm to Hime-sama with how weak she is now. It's too dangerous." Manase said as he frowned.

"If that's the case, what ways does the Geezer have to cure Nobuna-sama?"

Under the stare of Hisahide's sharp eyes, Manase can only emit an "Uhhhh".

You guys are bothering me here. How about I poison you along with that child... Hisahide's eyes seemed to threaten as they all but bored holes through Manase.

"Bitter medicines tend to work best. If it can save Nobuna-sama's life, I will turn a blind eye to any side

effects it will bring. But Danjo-chan, that drug, has it been tested on humans yet?"

"Hmm, I had tested it on myself. During the period when the drug was taking effect, I had a dream where I was with Nobuna-sama in Tamon mountain castle having a steamboat(!) while talking, and there were no adverse side effects."

"If so, it seems kinda safe." Nene said.

"Danjo-chan, after taking so many drugs and toxins, your body already has a resistance to most poisons, and your body isn't the same as an ordinary girl's. You can't be considered a good test subject, definitely not."

Hisahide narrowed her eyes and laughed, "At least I can say that it won't harm Nobuna-sama's life. This I guarantee with my own head."

Though Manase had an ominous feeling, he decided Hisahide's plan to be the best one anyways.

Just like this, Hisahide herself entered Nobuna's room.

"Is that really okay? Nene is kinda worried."

"Uhh, this is a gamble... Whether Danjo-chan's medicine is good or bad, we will have to see Hime-sama's fate."

"Hime-sama, to have become so weak... How pitiful.."

Hisahide looked at Nobuna, tortured by the high fever , and couldn't help but shed a tear as she held Nobuna's hand tightly.

That ****er who shot Nobuna with an arquebus was still hiding at Mount Hiei now.

Mount Hiei was a spiritual mountain that prohibited females from entering.

So as to say, the Oda army, comprised primarily of female warriors, couldn't search for that ****er.

In fact, Hisahide had sent out numerous request to " Give us that ****er.", but Mount Hiei had rejected all of it by saying, "Unclean female daimyos have nothing to do with us."

And, the allied forces of Asai and Asakura had pitched camp in that Mount Hiei.

Both Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide couldn't enter due to being female.

How despicable is this...

What do they think women are...

Hisahide lost her home and family due to the wars in Kyoto and was picked up by and raised in Koufuku temple. It was due to these fallen monks that she had despaired and abandoned Buddhism.

Of course, among the monks, there weren't just fallen monks. There were still monks following strictly to the rules and praying for the people. But there were monks who, in their arrogance and without any care for their Buddhist teachings, started killing without thought and built attitudes that made them think of women as " unclean" even though they worship Buddha. Many monks fell and were ruled by their desires due to these reasons.

The young Hisahide, whether she found herself in Kyoto or Nara, she was insulted by the monks, who viewed her as a "Bastard from overseas."

Because of that, she learned spear skills and poisons to protect herself.

Thinking about the past, Hisahide’s heart came alight with black flames as an incredibly fierce look darkened her face.

"Nobuna-sama, Matsunaga Hisahide will personally catch that bastard that had hurt you and subject him to torture. I will bury him in the sand until only his head remains, letting passersby use saws to slowly saw off his neck. Though there are a few people who treat bloodying criminals as a game and have fun with it, the criminal subjected to it will definitely be better off dead. Correct, it's not enough just killing him. To have harmed Nobuna-sama's beautiful body with a bullet, I must let him taste something much more terrible than death!"

While speaking to Nobuna, Hisahide put a black fluid into the famous tea kettle, Hiragumo and started boiling it.

"Come, drink it down. With this, the nightmares will end and that which replaces it will be dreams full of happiness and joy, dreams that Nobuna-sama truly wants."

Even when Nobuna-sama had suffered such a serious injury and become so weak, she was still beautiful beyond comparison.

Hime-sama... I will protect you using any means necessary.

Hisahide looked at Nobuna's sleeping face, and putting the bowl to Nobuna's dry lips, she slowly, very slowly fed her the boiled medicine.

"...Uhh...Uhh...Umm."

...

...

...

「サル、逃げて……！」

夢の中で信奈は、地獄と化した金ヶ崎をさまよっていた。

"Saru, run...."

Nobuna was dreaming about Kanegasaki, a place that had become hell on earth.

This... Just how many times had she seen it?

The forever repeating... nightmare.

For the dream of conquering the world, Nobuna who had abandoned Sagara Yoshiharu in Kanegasaki and fled had been searching and wandering about for Yoshiharu in Kanegasaki ever since getting shot.

"Hey, Saru, Yoshiharu! I'm such an idiot! If you are dead, who will accompany me to sail across the wide seas? With just me, what meaning is there for me to fulfill my dreams!? So... Please, I beg you, come back...."

As she wept, she rode through the mountain path.

Through this hill, I will have to once again witness the scene where Saru was caught and killed by those people hunting for escaping warriors.

And as I look at Saru dying, my heart too, is dying slowly with him.

No more, she doesn't want to experience such a nightmare anymore.

If, if I had to experience this never ending nightmare as I live on, then I should just.....

But,

The dream this time, wasn't a nightmare.

Over the hill, she could see Yoshiharu leading the 500 strong troops back with gusto.

".....Yoshiharu.....!?"

"Ohh, Nobuna? Wh...Wh...Wh...Why did you come back? Anyway, who is Yoshiharu?"

"Isn't that you!? You, have you forgotten your own name? Your intelligence is really that of a monkey."

"Sh...Shut up! If you just suddenly call me ‘Yoshiharu’, I’m not going to know how to react in time."

".....Yoshiharu!!"

Nobuna ran towards Yoshiharu, and without saying anything, hugged him.

Her tears could not be stopped.

Though she had once thought it was a dream... But, this wasn't a dream.

This was the real Yoshiharu. The warm, slightly sweaty-odored Yoshiharu. Her chest could feel his heart thumping, the real Yoshiharu.

I don't care anymore, whether this is a dream or reality.

My dream is, to conquer the world, see for myself the different wonders of the world across the wide seas and...

And, this strange man who proclaimed he came from future Japan, to be by my side, and protect me.

Saying, "Nobuna, you are necessary to this country, I know it. Even if others in this era don't understand you, I understand you!" and support me from behind.

Is such a feeling love...? Or is this the same as the namban missionary who I had once admired as my elder brother....? This... I don't know yet.

I don't understand, but this feeling is definitely not the same ...

With Father... The Missionary... Hirate-jii-san... Viper... and all the guys I had loved from the past, there was a fundamental difference.

Because, once we meet, a pain starts in my chest.

A feeling that I have not felt from birth, I... must have...

"Oi Nobuna, just how long do you intend to hug me, and your expression is kinda weird, what happened?"

"Wh...What is it... I... I was worried about you, just what kind of attitude is this?"

"Commander! Seems like the atmosphere is getting hotter, hahaha."

"Get married once you return to Kyoto!"

"Shut up you guys! We had to save Asai Nagamasa who was imprisoned and help him get back his position as head, and then defeat the Asakura forces... We will need to head out once we get back, won't we!? There will be war very soon!"

Yoshiharu let Nobuna sit on his thighs as he hugged her waist with a single hand, his other hand holding the reins as he rode forward.

Nobuna's heart couldn't help but have a doubt... Yoshiharu, this fellow... When did he become so skilled in riding...?

"Hey Yoshiharu, is that true about helping Nagamasa get back the position of head of the Asai clan?"

"Ahhh, it's true. Our back troops are all safe, so there isn't anything to worry about. Juubei-chan and the rest have already made it back to Kyoto safely!"

"Dearuka... Good... Everyone is still safe."

"Ahhh." Yoshiharu said as he hugged Nobuna a little stronger.

"So that's the thing, Nobuna. After returning to Kyoto, we will continue our battle to conquer the world! The Asakura clan had already surrendered under the lightning fast attacks by Asai, so there are no more enemies in the central area! Imai-jii-san from Sakai also sent us lots of military funds, and the military strength of Oda clan is now 20000! We are Japan's strongest!"

"Ahhh...Uhh, Bu...But we had a promise, if you came back alive, I would reward you. That reward, I should give it to you soon..."

"Ahh, that promise of a kiss? Since there isn't enough time, how about now we....."

"Wait, nonononono! Aren't the soldiers looking at us!? I...I...I...I haven't kissed a man before, s...so it's not good if it's not some deserted place! Ahh, but, after returning from Kyoto, Manchiyo and Riku will come and disturb.... "

Yoshiharu revealed his white teeth, laughed and said, "There won't be anyone to disturb us."

Huh... What is going on? Suddenly, Yoshiharu seems to be 5 times manlier than usual.... This fellow... Had he been that suave before? Nobuna tilted her head in puzzlement.

But, but this was okay too, so she did not mind it much.

"You haven't heard anything yet, Nobuna. Nagahide-dono and Katsuie-dono will no longer disturb us. Well, Katsuie is still crazy with jealousy, but Nagahide plans to give us a wedding and is currently preparing at Kyoto."

"Ehhhhh? W-wait... What is this... Wa...Wait, I...I...I... When did I say I wanted to marry you? Th...The...The... There is such a big difference in our family status."

Yoshiharu revealed his extremely white teeth again as he played with his hair on the forehead, "That's troubling ..."

"Well, after surviving the "Retreat at Kanegasaki", I have become known throughout Kyoto; even the kids and nobles have recognized me as a big hero. The people all feel that there isn't anyone else who could match Oda Nobuna. Well, it's such a thing now. I would actually

prefer a girl with bigger breasts, but everyone would probably be unhappy if I said no."

"Shut up! Mine aren't small, okay? If anyone has small breasts, it's Hanbei! Compared to her, mine are already considered big! And, why are you so engrossed with girls' breasts? Breasts are used to nurture babies; to be so engrossed after growing up, are you a pervert!?"

"Breasts are men's romance! Hahahaha" Yoshiharu revealed his teeth and laughed.

"Geez, stupid...." Nobuna mumbled.

"But, since Himiko-sama told me 'I leave Nobuna-sama to you', I can't really reject anymore...."

"Hi...Him...Himiko-sama said so herself! Th...Then there is no other way. If I reject, won't I be disloyal?" With a do or die attitude, Nobuna sent her lips over to Yoshiharu.

"See, we can see Kyoto now, Nobuna."

"Ahh...."

"Everyone has come to congratulate us for our return and give us their blessings for the wedding."

Part 6

Dusk, Kyoto.

The wedding had begun.

Congrats, congrats,

Everyone's faces were full of smiles.

The wedding between them started just like this.

Inuchiyo said, "....Hime-sama is here." as she raised her bamboo spear.

"M...M...M...My Hime-sama, uwahhhhh~!"

"With this, Hime-sama will definitely be happy. Full points!"

Katsuie and Nagahide had gathered the presents and blessings from Kyoto and Sakai.

"As expected from Gorilla, no, Sagara-senpai! To be able to have Nobuna-sama's fancy, I, Juubei Mitsuhide admit defeat! Nobuna-sama, you must be happy from now on!" Mitsuhide set aside her work cooking takoyaki to send them her blessings.

"The wedding ceremony will be held at the namban church, and I will be the Father" Frois laughed and said.

Once she sees Yoshiharu with his eyes locked onto Frois's gigantic breasts, Nobuna felt disgusted and aimed a kick at him wordlessly.

"As expected from Japan's no 1 bishoujo, strong and distinguished. It's normal for Yoshiharu-sama to fall in love with such a Nobuna-sama. Nobuna-sama isn't an opponent that I, Takenaka Hanbei can win against, so I must resign myself to only being the mistress of Yoshiharu-sama. *Sob*Sob*"

"That may not be enough, Yoshiharu-shi's perverseness is totally shocking. Maybe he will claim me as his wife too."

"Ahhh, brat, if you dare to touch our eternal idol, Goemon, we will definitely kill you!"

"Sh...Shut up~nya."

"Ahhh, here it is! Boss's stuttering!!!"

"From now on, I have to start monitoring Onii-sama to make sure he isn't perverted to any other girls but Hime-sama. With this job I, Nene am the biggest contributor!"

Next, Nagamasa and her brother, Nobusumi, Motoyasu and Imagawa Yoshimoto had all sent her their blessings.

"The cuisines had quite a lot of work put in. As the head of the chefs, I, Imai Sougyu can guarantee it. Everyone please dig in, and never forget about this wedding."

And, the officiator for today was the bride's godfather, Saitou Dousan, who had rushed here from Mino.

"Good, good, Nobuna-dono. I, Saitou Dousan thought I would not get to see my goddaughter donning on her wedding dress. Right now, I'm the happiest father in Japan."

With a face mixed with the happiness and sadness of marrying off his daughter, his voice seems a little weepy as he completely transformed into "Buddha Dousan".

And there was still one more, Tsuchida Gozen, Nobuna's biological mother, who had seldom even met with her daughter.

"Kichi, I'm sorry for being so hard on you all this while . Your mother didn't want a princess like you to swing around swords, but to be a normal princess and attain your happiness for yourself. Seeing you being so fixated on conquering the world, I had to be so cold to you. But now, with Sagara-dono protecting you, your mother will not worry anymore. Let us mother and child go back to living like before."

Tsuchida Gozen’s face was streaked with tears from her joy.

"What a crowd." While humming a song, Yoshiharu lifts Nobuna up.

"Let's go to the namban church now, Nobuna. But, from now on, I should call you ‘Kichi’, I think."

Just being simply called "Kichi" by Yoshiharu made Nobuna feel a terribly sweet pain from the deepest part in her chest.

Why isn't Matsunaga Danjo here, it was such an occasion.

If this goes on, I really will marry Yoshiharu!

"Wa...Wa...Wait, even I don't know if I want to marry you and be your wife, and you didn't say anything about liking me or what. There are lot's of procedures and things that we didn't do yet. I, know nothing about men... Of...Of course it's not that I'm not willing to marry you... Ju... Just that I want some time to prepare my own heart... So.....!"

"Che" "Che" "Che" Somehow, the whole crowd gave Nobuna their annoyed voices.

"It's impossible for me to ha...ha...hate you, but... Umm ...Uhh... to marry all of a sudden, it's too fast....!"

"I see, there's no helping it then. You've given up, huh? As expected from a top rank girl. Then, as replacement, super bishoujo Juubei, are you willing to marry me?"

"Ehhh? Is that really ok? Of course I'm ok with it, Sagara-senpai. I did it!!!"

At the namban style music that signified the start of the wedding, the overly excited Mitsuhide held onto Yoshiharu's hand and escaped outside.

"Juubei! Why can you never read the atmosphere? And what's with your happy expression! Isn't Yoshiharu your rival!? Wa...Wait!!!!! Yoshiharu is... YOSHIHARU BELONGS TO ME!!!!!!!!"

- Bang*

"Everyone run. Nobuna's gone crazy and started shooting everywhere!"

Ahh! Ahh! Ahh!

Wah! Wah! Wah!

Why... Why had things become like this...?

Somehow... things don't feel right...

Part 7

"...A dream...? Danjo?"

"Yes." Matsunaga Hisahide who was kneeling at her side answered.

Nobuna wakes up and saw the dark ceiling of Hounou temple.

"The medicine that ended Nobuna-sama's nightmare and gave you sweet dreams was very effective. Your temperature is going down and now, and Nobuna-sama has finally woken up. What a miracle."

"....Dearuka."

"What a happy smile, it's a cute smiling face that I've never seen before. Just what were you dreaming, Nobuna-sama?"

Nobuna could not answer Hisahide’s question.

She tried her best to suppress the urge to cry from the deepest parts of her body, but with that, the wound on her abdomen started to hurt again.

But, what pained her beyond belief wasn't the wound on her abdomen, but her chest.

"....Dream, it's just a dream, it isn't real....."

With just the force needed to squeeze these words out, Nobuna is already exhausted.

Hisahide feels that Nobuna's heart, though she had woken up from her dream, was starting to break again.

Nobuna's face was deathly pale.

The happiness that she had never felt before... that joyous mood... From the bottom of her heart, she felt happy to be alive, and had for the first time thanked the God and Buddha that she had never met before.

But all of that... was just a dream...

So....

So this is what I really want in my heart...

Such a small, and ordinary... but impossible to fulfilled dream....

Impossible because... because Sagara Yoshiharu is already.....

.

"Hmmm, Nobuna-sama, your wound is starting to hurt again. Please drink this medicine.

Hisahide fed the freshly boiled medicine to Nobuna.

It held a strong fragrance, a medicine that was sweet like honey.

"It's a drug that can lighten one’s mood mysteriously."

"....Ah...."

Just from drinking a sip, Nobuna's conscious starts to blur.

"Like dreaming, yet not sleeping, it is a drug that can let you experience sweet dreams when awake. When I was betrayed and my mind was caught up with some detestable matters from the past, when every day was terrible, I often drank this too."

"....Danjo... My head is dizzy, the things in the room... I can't see them clearly... Upside down...."

"Hmmm, because the medicine is too strong for first timers, but it’s not a problem. Even if the world has become your enemy, I will stand by Nobuna-sama's side,

and protect you from anyone who hurts you, don't worry ."

"Ahh, Ahh... Danjo... Am I dreaming... or am I awake... I... can't seem... to distinguish..."

Lifting the frightened and shivering Nobuna, Hisahide used her well developed bosom as a pillow and lulled Nobuna like taking care of a baby.

Just like a child lying down on her mother's breasts, Nobuna quiets down, "Don't be afraid, my cute child... Nobuna-sama, have you heard of the story of ‘The Duke of Zhou’?"

"What.... is that?"

"It's a story from Tang. Long long ago, there was a man named Zhou Gong who dreamt that he turned into a butterfly flying in the air. He suddenly woke up and thought to himself, had he had a dream of turning into a butterfly, or did a butterfly have a dream of turning into a man named Zhou Gong?"

"....Just which side... is the truth?"

"Hmmm, no matter which side, both are true, both are illusions. No one knows what's real or not in this world, so in actual fact, the world in our dreams is real and this world is just a dream. Things like happiness are just things from one's heart. No matter if one attains happiness in a dream or in the real world, they are the same happiness. When you are feeling terrible, and are crying, let me use my drugs to send you into the dream world."

"Hmmm."

"I, Matsunaga Danjo, no matter how many times, I will let Hime-sama have a dream full of happiness."

"....Hmmmm."

"What a cute child."

A non stop feeling of dizziness, and a feeling of dropping.

Hisahide used her own chest to hold onto me as this feeling took hold.

A little warm, the feeling isn't bad.

A love from a mother, and from Sagara Yoshiharu, both a love I could never feel.

If so, then let me be doted on forever by Hisahide like this.

Just...

The pain in her chest that almost threatens to tear her apart can't seem to disappear.

Why is that?

As expected, this world is the real one.

But in some corner of her heart, Nobuna who was being hugged by Hisahide doesn't seem to agree.

".....Maeda Inuchiyo has returned."

Manase Belchior and Nene brought Inuchiyo who had returned hurriedly to Nobuna's room.

".....Inuchiyo...? Where did she go...? Where is Juubei and the rest? Where's Saru....?"

Nobuna who had just woken up did not understand the current situation of the Oda army.

The incident that the Asai and Asakura allied forces were forced to stop at the streets of Wakasa due to Yoshiharu, and had moved from Lake Biwa to western Omi, and were currently at Mount Hiei.

The incident about that bastard who sniped Nobuna and escaped into Mount Hiei.

The incident about Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide leading the Oda army who had retreated back to Kyoto to surround Mount Hiei, but was unable to begin attacking due to Mount Hiei prohibiting females from entering.

The incident about Takigawa Kazumasu and Saitou Dousan who was protecting Mino and Owari and were unable to send reinforcements due to anti-Nobuna forces appearing everywhere.

"....Where's Saru? Where is Saru and Juubei? Where are they? Inuchiyo?"

Seemingly drunk, Nobuna with misty eyes repeated again like she was sleep talking.

"...Hey, Inuchiyo, Saru is alright, right? And where did Juubei run off to?"

Inuchiyo, Manase and Nene, all of them can't seem to tell the truth to this weak Nobuna.

At this moment, Matsunaga Hisahide said, "First, another sip of the medicine."

To not let Nobuna collapse, Hisahide let Nobuna drink a high potency drug.

"Danjo-chan, is that.... Nono, to let Nobuna-sama drink such a medicine... What if she is poisoned...?"

Though Manase tried to stop her, Hisahide cut him off, saying "Quiet, geezer!" with a sharp stare, and he stammered to a stop.

"All I did was give Nobuna-sama a drug that can bring happiness to the heart, right, Nobuna-sama?"

"....Yes....Danjo..."

"Sagara Yoshiharu was chased by Wakasa's omyouji, Tsuchimikado, and was blown to pieces at the end. Not even a single piece of him remains... To take revenge for Sagara Yoshiharu, Akechi Mitsuhide rushed forwards but dropped into a huge crack in the ground prepared by

Tsuchimikado, and is currently missing. She is most likely dead."

"...De....Dearuka."

Nobuna's vision suddenly blurred as she loses all her strength, her face lightly caressed by Hisahide.

Manase was shocked, "You...You who has all the while stayed in this house, why did you know the situation to such an extent, Danjo-chan?"

Danjo laughed alluringly, "I have spies called puppets. "

The expression that Nobuna had now...

Was like the world had already been destroyed.

This world is a dream... It definitely is.

The real me is currently having a wedding with Saru with everyone's blessing... Uhh, to marry such a lecherous Saru, why must this Owari princess marry such a Saru and have his child?

".....Hime-sama, please open your eyes. If Hime-sama doesn't take control of the situation, the Oda clan will be destroyed."

Inuchiyo reached out to her.

Ahh? ....Don't tell me... this Inuchiyo... is real?

Being shaken by Inuchiyo, Nobuna dreamingly said.

"....Inuchiyo... is real?"

Inuchiyo who had made her resolve, nodded.

"....I... saw it... myself... Yoshiharu is already dead.... Mitsuhide too... I'm afraid...."

Nene collapsed in an instant, and was howling on the tatami.

"Onii-sama.... Onii-sama... Nene... is willing to replace Onii-sama to die... I had already tried my best to pray to God-sama, Buddha-sama, Nekogami-sama....!"

Totally collapsed...

In Nobuna's heart, something had totally collapsed, and her grief vanished as if it wasn't there.

In its place, the feeling that poured out,

Fury...

Even if her body was burned to ashes by flames, intense fury that will never disappear..

"Hmmm, Tsuchimikado had entered Mount Hiei and had joined with Asai and Asakura allied forces. What should we do, Nobuna-sama?"

".....Attack.... Mount Hiei....."

Manase said with panic, "If we do such a blasphemous thing, all Buddhist factions in Japan will become our enemies!"

But Matsunaga Hisahide continued to whisper in Nobuna's ears.

"Nobuna-sama, though Mount Hiei is said to be a spiritual mountain guarding the gate of demons of Kyoto , in actual fact, it is the real culprit of all the unrest in Kyoto. Commanding the monks and defying Kyoto's

shogunate, they had recently even reduced Kyoto to a sea of fire during a recent war; even young children weren't spared. They claim ‘Women are unclean’, but the monks are all like hungry wolfs."

Hisahide's words were the last little push she needed.

Nobuna forgot about the pain at her abdomen and stood up.

Her vision was still blurry.

She still couldn't see properly the things in the room.

Her body was still weak.

But fury was radiating from both her eyes.

And because of this.... immense fury that she had never experienced before...

Nobuna’s weak body stood up.

The me that thanked the gods after seeing such a dream was too dumb.

Those monks at Owari too, after saying that they could cure Father by praying with gusto, they were just looking at Father dying day by day when they are reciting their incantations. And after that, they even shamelessly requested huge pay.

They went too far when they said 'Your father had killed too many people, this is retribution' and had blamed her father who had just passed away.

At that time, because of Hirate-jii-san stopping me when I went berserk, those monks survived from the fire.

But this time...

This time I must...

Saru...

Juubei...

Let me kill all those who took my dream away, those who kill my companions that shared my dream, those who claimed they are the protectors of the spiritual mountain yet said females are unclean. Kill them all.

I have to let those bastards taste their just desserts....

But... as though she were still dreaming... her body didn't have any strength.

Was this a continuation of the nightmare? Or....?

"....Riku and the rest won't be able to do it, so I will command the army personally... Bring me to the base right now... Manchiyo."

At the support of Hisahide, Nobuna gave the order with difficulty.

This wasn't the normal way Nobuna addressed Inuchiyo and Nagahide.

Nobuna, though truly conscious, would never give such an order.

"....Those monks who use Buddhism as their shield and do whatever they like, Tsuchimikado, and Asai Asakura, kill all of them....."

Her voice was hollow, as if Nobuna had become Hisahide's puppet.

But, this was still an order given by Nobuna herself.

And though her vision was blurry, the fury in her eyes was undoubtedly Nobuna's.

Inuchiyo, who was too serious said, "Roger." and bowed.

Chapter 3 : Mitsuhide's trial

Part 1

Deep in the night.

In the extremely dark wilderness.

There were *Ding Dang* sounds of soldiers moving about coming from everywhere.

"....Damn, I can no longer distinguish which direction I'm heading....."

Sagara Yoshiharu was using a sword as a walking stick, trudging through the wilderness based on his instinct.

At the time he had fallen for Tsuchimikado's trap at Mizusaka Ridge, Yoshiharu should have been blown to pieces.

To save the last few lives of the back troops, Yoshiharu should have used his own life as a sacrifice.

But,

Though Yoshiharu had wanted to sacrifice himself for his companions, in the end he wanted to live on no matter what.

Images of Nobuna crying flashed through his mind.

Inuchiyo,

Katsuie, Nagahide.

Juubei, Motoyasu, Goemon.

And Hanbei who was waiting for his return in Kyoto, Nene too...

I might be trapped in this sengoku era forever, never to see my family again.

But even so..... There are people here who will cry for me, people who wished that I had lived on.

If I give up here, those comrades who died in the 'Retreat of Kanegasaki' for Nobuna and me will scold me.

Since I have declared to change Nobuna's fate,

Since I have decided to fulfill Nobuna's dreams.

Then, even if he had to crawl back, he must live on.

These were his true feelings.

Even if he was being willful, he wanted to go through with both feelings of his.

"I'm a man full of desires; I won't give anything up."

He considered his back troops his comrades; they must all live.

At that time, Hanzou had appeared behind Yoshiharu and whispered to him the last strategy.

They would make use of the trick, "Finely Hidden."

It was a trick that Yoshiharu had not even heard of, but since it was suggested by the seasoned ninja, Hanzou ,

Yoshiharu agreed without much thinking.

Then, Hanzou shouted.

"If that's the case, go die now, Sagara Yoshiharu."

Ninja skill, "Finely Hidden" was such a trick.

During the time Hanzou opened up his smokescreen to block the vision of everyone, he made an exchange with Sagara Yoshiharu and his "substitute."

The real Sagara Yoshiharu was hidden in a hole that the ninja squad dug on the spot.

And that substitute was, yes, Zenki.

After Zenki wore Yoshiharu's armor, he changed his looks and became Yoshiharu.

At almost the same time the ninja squad led by Hanzou and Zenki completed their preparations, Tsuchimikado, who appeared deep in the valley blew away the smokescreen.

And just as everyone's vision recovered, the exchange was finally completed.

What happened later was what Akechi Mitsuhide, Inuchiyo and Motoyasu saw as they come to rescue Yoshiharu.

For his comrades in the back troops, the substitute Zenki was blown to pieces.

Because the bomb was specially created by Hanzou, the substitute was blown to fine pieces and the trick wasn't discovered.

This is the trick, "Finely Hidden".

The real last resort.

If Tsuchimikado discovered any clues, the whole plan would go under, or after the substitute was killed, it is a possibility that Tsuchimikado will ignore the promise and continue killing the back troops.

Even if Tsuchimikado did what he promised, the soldiers who were hunting escapees may surround the warriors to capture them.

Hanzou and the ninja squad had planned to dig Yoshiharu out after Tsuchimikado left and once again escort him back to Kyoto.

But, Yoshiharu who was waiting underground did not see Hanzou returning for him.

"Something must have happened."

Using the protection of nightfall, Yoshiharu crawled out by himself, took a set of armor from a fallen comrade and started to walk back to Kyoto.

Whether it was good luck that the appearance of Juubei Mitsuhide diverted Tsuchimikado and kept him from discovering the trick, or bad luck that Hanzou placed the escorting of Motoyasu as the foremost priority , Yoshiharu did not yet know.

Correct, it was because Matsudaira Motoyasu had come to Mizusaka Ridge alone, not leading any troops, so Hanzou, focused on protecting his master, abandoned the buried Yoshiharu.

Because they were in the midst of enemy's ranks, Hanzou did not say anything about the trick to Motoyasu, and when she heard of it, they were already back in Kyoto.

But, this too was not known to Yoshiharu since he was in the ground.

Obviously, the thing about Mitsuhide who had fallen into the crack, the shaken Inuchiyo who had reported that Yoshiharu was dead, the thing about Nobuna who had become Hisahide's puppet and gave the crazy order to "Burn Mount Hiei", Yoshiharu knew nothing of all of these.

No matter what, I must use these two legs of mine and make it back to Kyoto.

Having made such a resolve, Yoshiharu started his nightmarish escape.

His stomach growled, and his throat was parched. His whole body was heavy like he was carrying lead.

But even so, Yoshiharu did not stop walking.

There is a place he must go.

If he fell right here, what would Nobuna's fate become. ..?

I can't die yet.

With the last of his strength, he crawled forward to avoid the escapee hunting squads.

Countless times, they almost discovered him.

There were also countless cuts on his body.

Just as he couldn't even see where he was anymore,

It started raining.

The escapee hunting squads started to narrow down their searching areas.

"There! Right there!"

"Ahh, he looks kinda weird, it must be a famous warrior!"

"We can get a great reward from Asai-sama!"

Yoshiharu dragged his numb legs and ran in the mud.

No words of discouragement were said, and his eyes were still filled with hope. Anyone would have sunk into despair at such a situation, but Yoshiharu thought only of surviving.

And that which supported Yoshiharu was...

"Nobuna.... Nobuna, wait for me, I can't die at such a place. I'm not called 'Dodgeball Sagara' for nothing! Run, run, hurry and run!"

If I die here, what will Nobuna think?

I can't let that fellow experience such a thing.

If it's that fellow, she will say she can't forgive me, but her heart will still be sad for me.

Most likely.

No, definitely... she will feel sad.

It must be so.

So,

So, I must live on.

Ahhh, damn.

Why is my mind full of that girl?

I can't see anything in front of me anymore.

Can't see my legs either.

Somehow, there is only Nobuna's face in my mind.

Don't tell me, I...

like that girl....

Somehow, without me noticing... I have fallen in love with her...?

That girl will never be together with me. She is the girl that was closest and furthest from me.

But, it's a fact that I like her, there's no helping it.

Because of this...

Because of this, I want to see her again.

"No! Nono! It's not like that! I... Yeah, I'm just too tired! It's just because of fatigue and fear, my mind is a mess now. A totally not cute boyish girl like her appearing at such a time in my mind is just to increase my fury. I must , after returning, get the reward... That girl's kiss, I'm taking it now, that liar who always goes back on her promises of rewards, I will not let you escape this time! Clean your lips and wait, Nobuna!”

- pant*
- drip*
- Ouch*

His back... seems to be hit by an arrow.

"...The dodge ball Sagara was actually... Damn it, I must have been distracted by Nobuna... Damn it, I must ask that girl to increase the reward..."

Yoshiharu slowly falls forward into the mud, as in his heart he was thinking...

His vision, and the feelings of his limbs, was fading away...

Kyoto...

Kyoto... I.. want to return...

They were his last words...

"Nene..... I'm sorry.... I can't return to your side already....."

Why was it that, even though that god-sister was always disturbing him and interrupting his flirting with girls, at the end, he apologized to her without thinking.

Yoshiharu finally noticed.

So it's like this.

I... in this world... I already have a family here...

So, to be able for me to put in effort till now...

"Nene, I, will return... to you...."

Sagara Yoshiharu's heart stopped beating...

Part 2

"...Unbelievable, gorillas are different from normal people. They are agile and the mountains are their hometown. No, mountains are where they breed and live . How can that bastard die in the mountains?"

The warrior holding onto Yoshiharu's nearly finished fate was.....

Yes, she was Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide.

Mitsuhide, whose situation everyone thought was hopeless and had given up as she had fallen into the deep crack with her horse, seems to have been protected by the heavens. Now, she was in the wilderness of western Omi alone looking for Sagara Yoshiharu.

It's true that at that time, Mitsuhide, who had lost her calmness, did not notice the peculiarity ahead and had fallen into the huge crack that Tsuchimikado prepared.

But...

As if it was possessed, Mitsuhide's horse struggled with all its strength to hold on to the walls of the crack.

Like "Heaven's will" forbidding Mitsuhide to die and thus controlling the horse.

The horse's stunning actions protected Mitsuhide, as she pulled out her sword just before the horse's strength was exhausted and jumped up from the horse.

And then, forcing the blade deep into an opening between the rocks, she halted her fall.

This was a miracle that can only be achieved by Mitsuhide's remarkable reflexes.

At that time, the strong impact had dislocated Mitsuhide's shoulder, but she did not give up as she pulled another sword to use like an ice axe. Using just her left hand, she climbed step by step towards the top that she couldn't even see, and when she finally returned to the valley, Motoyasu and the rest were gone, and Yoshiharu had already crawled out of the ground and retreated himself.

The smart Mitsuhide found the hole that Yoshiharu hid in and discovered the trick.

"This is a substituting trick done by both Hanzou and Zenki. Senpai is still alive!"

But Matsudaira-dono and Maeda-dono were different from this smart Mitsuhide. They were all but hopeless idiots, in fact, so they must have not found out that Senpai was in the ground and had returned to Kyoto like this.

But, that ninja who resorted to any means to complete his mission sure was a cold one.

To protect his own master, Hattori Hanzou abandoned Sagara-senpai and me who had fallen into the crack without hesitation.

"Now, the only one who can save Sagara-senpai is me, Juubei Mitsuhide... That bastard, whose only good point is his eloquence, will never be able to return to Kyoto himself!"

After forcing her shoulder back into place, Mitsuhide started the search for Sagara Yoshiharu.

And then,

Finally, she found him.

Sagara Yoshiharu, who was deep in the bushes, had fallen face first into the mud.

His hand, seemingly wishing for something, was reaching out towards Kyoto.

"Sagara-senpai, till when do you plan to sleep? Hurry and get up!"

Mitsuhide with a gleeful face "With this, Gorilla-senpai will owe me a huge debt, hurray!" lifts Yoshiharu up while smiling.

But, Yoshiharu's eyes did not open.

"Because he is a monkey, so he can't wake up easily once he's asleep. What is this about, it's me, senpai, Oda clan's smartest, Juubei Mitsuhide!"

.....

"Uhh, there isn't any reaction, just like a corpse."

- Piak*X3

Slapping him a few times, Yoshiharu still does not move.

"...Don...Don't tell me...?"

It was only then that Mitsuhide found an arrow embedded in his back,

and hurriedly removed it,

Fortunately, the arrow did not hurt his lungs.

This... wasn't a fatal wound...

"With only this....? That's pathetic, Sagara-senpai... Senpai?"

Mitsuhide, who did not notice the atmosphere, finally saw it.

Sagara Yoshiharu whose eyes were tightly shut had no breath.

In an instant, Mitsuhide turned pale.

"....Wait....!? Gorilla!? S...Sh...Shit....!"

Putting her ear onto Yoshiharu's chest...

"Heartbeat... is gone too!"

His body had not turned stiff,

He should be dead quite recently, there is still hope.

But, Yoshiharu is basically right before hell's gates.

"Wh...Wh...Why did you die while I'm mumbling to myself? If you die like this, won't it seem to be my fault!? Uwahh... Uwahhh... Uwahhhhhhhhh!"

Mitsuhide took a few deep breaths and began to recall her moderate medical knowledge, trying her best to think of ways...

Wait!

I...I...I...I...It's all finished if I panic now! Calm down, calm down, calm down!"

If I...I...I...I...I don't save him immediately, Gorilla will really be a corpse forever!

"His heart had j...ju...jus...just stopped! I...I...It...It's lucky that you were found by me Mitsuhide, s...so...so... so... it's possible to revive him!"

Umm, the way to save a soldier that has collapse on the battlefield...

I...I...I...I...I see.

Air... To inject air straight into the lungs...

A...An...And then, do a few hits onto the chest area, to let the heart beat again!

Here, here!

Mitsuhide send a straight punch to Yoshiharu's chest without thinking.

"Huh? If this strongest warrior Mitsuhide was serious, Gorilla's ribcage, and heart will all be pierced! Ahhh, if so , if so, won't it look like I, Mitsuhide am the one who killed Senpai!? Before anyone sees anything, please come back to me. *Knock* *Knock* *Knock* *Knock*".

The heart massage should be enough like this, as expected, air is what is lacking, I must inject air into his lungs....

"....If that's the case, to do that, to inject air, I...I...I...I remembered it to be....."

I've remembered.

I can do it! Laughing and putting on a victory pose, Mitsuhide suddenly shouted "Ahhhh" as her eyes became wet and she started trembling...

"C...Ca...Ca...Can't it be done without the kisssssssss!? Ahhhhhh!"

If she didn't do the CPR soon, Yoshiharu would really be beyond help, Mitsuhide realized.

"S...S...St...Stop joking! I, Mitsuhide... I... I... am a perfect female warrior comprised of both looks and talent, w...wh...why must I let this Saru take my first kiss!? Though it's because of CPR and this won't count as a kiss, but, but to let this Gorilla be my first kiss target, no way.....!"

As Mitsuhide was blushing, with tears flowing all over her face and struggling, Yoshiharu's remaining time was slowly running out.

Yoshiharu's sleeping face, no it's a dying face, nono, Senpai isn't dead yet, so it should be a sleeping face...

Anyway, upon seeing Yoshiharu's face, Mitsuhide finally decided.

"You...useless gorilla! Compensate me properly once you wake up!"

No, wait, if I don't brush my teeth, my mouth stinks... Mitsuhide's mouth definitely stinks now... Ahh, if I had known this, I would not have eaten so much of Tennoujiya's specialty miso takoyaki. It's all that glum faced Tsuda Soukyu's fault for saying "These takoyaki can't sell at all.", how can those delicious miso takoyaki not be selling at all!?

Ahh, I'm escaping from the fact that I need to kiss Gorilla!

"Ahh, Ahh! Enough! Here goes....! Uhh, Uhhhhh!"

Though she hates it to the point of almost crying, and had in fact begun to shed many tears, she wouldn't be Mitsuhide if she abandoned her comrade now.

"....At Kiyomizu temple, Sagara-senpai saved my life, this time, let me, Mitsuhide save Senpai's"

- Hiss*

With a blushing red face, Mitsuhide inhaled a deep breath and force her cute lips onto Yoshiharu's lips.

"....Um....Ummm....Ummmm."

To not let any air leak out, her lips overlapped Yoshiharu's tightly as she sent air to his lungs.

Of course, though she really hated it, she did not forget to pinch Yoshiharu's nose.

Mitsuhide's breath had a mildly sweet scent, totally void of any stench of takoyaki.

But, without any preparation, the stench of Yoshiharu's mouth flew into Mitsuhide's nostrils and Mitsuhide was struck dizzy by it.

Finally, she had sent all the air in her lungs into Yoshiharu's mouth... but,

"....It...It didn't work? Yo...You want more...? Uhh, Uhhh... Hum...Humiliating... I... I might die first....."

You bastard! Not just my first kiss, but you plan to take even my second kiss!?

....

No, even my third kiss.....

...

Uhhh, it's the fourth time now. I Mitsuhide, am already dirtied, I can't face Nobuna-sama now.....

...

A total of five times, Mitsuhide did CPR to Yoshiharu while crying.

Once she had decided on something, she would finish it earnestly. That at least was a good point of Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide.

After the 5 sessions of CPR ended,

"Uhh... *Cough* *Cough**Cough**Cough**Cough*

Yoshiharu suddenly coughs violently.

His heart started beating again.

"I did it.... There is nothing that this clever Juubei Mitsuhide can't do! See Nobuna-sama, I, Mitsuhide will definitely bring Saru back! Ahhh... My mind is full of Nobuna-sama giving me compliments and praises. Mitsuhide is so happy now!"

- Cough* *Cough**Cough**Cough**

"Anyway, Gorilla, hurry and get up, how long do you plan to dilly-dally!?"

"...Uhh...Uhh...Uhh..."

Mitsuhide placed her wide forehead onto Yoshiharu's forehead.

"Ahh... it's hot!"

And then, she put her ears onto Yoshiharu's chest again.

Bathump...

"....The heartbeat... is weak, too weak. It's almost like it will stop at anytime. Senpai must have exhausted himself too much when retreating... If this goes on...."

The season had completely shifted into winter now.

And it was already deep in the night.

And it was still raining in the forest.

The cold air of the mountains and rain droplets were slowly taking away the body temperature of the collapsed and exhausted Yoshiharu.

"Ahhh, enough, the situation is going from bad to worse, but this smart Mitsuhide is a super genius capable of anything! At this time, all we need to do is to use the same methods as those who have met with mishaps while climbing mountains. So as to say, all I need to do is to maintain Senpai's body heat!"

Though she said that, if she raised a fire, she might be discovered by those escapee hunting squads....

And to raise a fire in the rain isn't a simple matter anyways.

Mitsuhide looked at her surroundings and discovered a narrow cave.

"If we hide in it, we can get shelter and it will definitely be warmer than outside.""

Uhhh.... Carrying the moaning Yoshiharu on her back, Mitsuhide walked towards the cave.

Though the opening was narrow, it was quite wide inside.

With a high ceiling, countless rocks supported the cave .

This was a work that would require thousands, tens of thousands of years.

There was a rumor of "Life of 20 years" in this chaotic sengoku era.

But this cave was slowly formed through long ages, years that humans could never even hope to live through .

In front of them, the quarrels between humans are minuscule.

Mitsuhide who looked upon this wonder put her palms together and prayed, "I wish that Nobuna-sama can end this chaotic era earlier."

And then, she remembered, "Oh my god, I've forgotten about Gorilla."

"Geez, what a troublesome senpai."

Saying it angrily, Mitsuhide allowed Yoshiharu to lie at her side as she gathered a few twigs to raise a fire.

"Hmph, with this, I have returned the debt at Kiyomizu temple, senpai! This won't be discovered easily , hurry and recover your strength!"

But,

Yoshiharu who had yet to wake up, moaned with tightly closed lips.

"....Cold...."

And then repeating this word...

Mitsuhide who was sitting beside Yoshiharu sighed.

"Looks like just raising a fire isn't enough, ca...can't be helped. I have no choice but to use the method to revive a freezing companion during mountain mishaps."

Mitsuhide breathe in deeply as she started to strip off her armor.

"G...Geez, Gorilla is really lucky. You... If you had not met this clever Juubei Mitsuhide, you would definitely be pig's food now."

Mitsuhide...

Had stripped off all the clothes she was wearing.

The moonlight that seeped into the cave, revealed the naked body of the embarrassed Mitsuhide.

The young and beautiful body.

If this cave is a wonder that was born naturally, then the beautiful body of this girl is the real mystery of a miracle being born naturally.

This utterly beautiful girl lowered her head reflexively.

Mitsuhide is so embarrassed now that she wants to commit seppuku.

But... to save Yoshiharu now, she had to warm him up through skin contact.

At Kiyomizu temple, Sagara Yoshiharu and Nobuna, together had saved my life.

No, not just my life.

Her heart, which had lost control and was only a puppet for Matsunaga Danjo Hisahide, had been saved as well.

"Please, Juubei. If you live through this but ever fear you are losing your way, think about this blood soaked Kiyomizu temple! Burn into your memory Nobuna's silhouette up there, firing shot after shot to save you...!"

In that Kiyomizu temple alight with flames, Sagara Yoshiharu's tear filled eyes seemed to want to transmit something as he shouted.

At that time, in the eyes of Yoshiharu, who was putting on a forced expression to looking at me,

Sadness, fury, and friendship; and I thought it to be strange. It made me ask "why?", that sad expression that the normally cheerful Yoshiharu gave me for the first time.

Why did Senpai look at me with such a sad expression?

At that time, Mitsuhide's heart was pierced by that sad expression.

The feelings that erupted from her heart were hard to be suppressed.

Why?

Just why?

What is it that Senpai wanted to tell me....?

Mitsuhide would never let Yoshiharu die before she solved that mystery.

No, maybe...

Maybe it's not just that he doesn't want me to die,

But wants me to live on properly...

"....Sagara-senpai, tonight, let Mitsuhide warm Senpai's body."

Mitsuhide stripped off Yoshiharu's clothes and tightly hugged the shivering and naked Yoshiharu's chest.

Part 3

It was cold.

Skin that was so cold that it felt like a corpse.

His back, and hands had countless wounds.

Just what kind of a cruel and violent battle was that Retreat at Kanegasaki...?

"Always... Always pushing himself so hard and being reduced to tatters... Senpai..."

Massaging Yoshiharu's back, Mitsuhide used her own thighs to overlap with Yoshiharu's, just a little bit more, as she tried her best to transmit her own body heat to Yoshiharu through their skin.

"....Mama...?"

Yoshiharu dreamily said.

Mitsuhide discovered, Senpai was dreaming.

".....Good.... I, have finally returned... Mama."

Mitsuhide silently caressed Yoshiharu's hair.

"....I had a terrible, terrible dream... I... slipped into the sengoku era... Though I did have lots of fun... But in the end, I was tasked with protecting the rear of a defeated army... and was chased by those escapee hunting squads. .. and had died... alone... Terrible dream."

He cried.

The man who always said, "I am Sagara Yoshiharu, who loves all girls in the world.", and had always put on a strong front, never showing a weak side. That Yoshiharu was currently weeping in Mitsuhide's bosom like a small child.

"....I, had tried my best... I did... I had someone I liked, and I wanted to protect her. For her, even if I was forcing it, I would do everything I could... But, I, wasn't able to do it in the end... But, I'm just a high school student. Battles, I can't... When my comrades die one by one in

front of me, and when I had to kill enemies I had no hatred for, and when bullets are flying..."

"....It's gonna be alright, Yoshiharu. Mama is here, I'm right here. The terrible dream is already over, just act like a spoilt child as you wish."

Mitsuhide used a voice full of maternal instincts and said.

"....Mama, it's scary... I want to go home... Want to see my friends, want to go to school, want to, see Mama..."

"Geez, Yoshiharu really is a coward. Seems like he is really from a peaceful future, but you have already tried your best Yoshiharu, your very best... He is a courageous and strong child."

Her two hands hugging Yoshiharu's head tightly, plunging his face deeply into the pure breasts of hers that had never been touched by a man.

"....Mama..."

I could feel that Yoshiharu's face is becoming much more relaxed.

Yoshiharu came from the future. The Japan of the future was a totally different world compared to this sengoku era, and had not experienced war for more than 10 years. The whole world was filled with peace, and of course, battles had not disappeared in the world, but like what Yoshiharu once said, in his world, everyone was trying their best to maintain the peace.

So neither Yoshiharu nor his parents had any knowledge of fighting.

For the first time, Mitsuhide thought, "Maybe it's really like this." and believed what Yoshiharu said.

This country, in the far future, is a country without war.

Yoshiharu had came over from that far, far away world, and, in this sengoku era that had nothing to do with him, for the sake of everyone's happiness, and to end the battles of this world, he had been fighting until now.

Mitsuhide wondered, if the situation was reversed, would she work as hard as Yoshiharu? Would she hold back the tears and the complaints, and keep moving forwards while looking ahead....? Maybe instead, she

would collapse from fear in a corner, crying and shivering.

"....Yoshiharu, is great, is a really great child, Mama will definitely praise Yoshiharu too."

With that, she thought she could see the sleeping Yoshiharu reveal a light smile.

"Yoshiharu, you don't want to return to the dream world? And... once again, try your best in the dream world?"

"....Ahh... I will work hard, Mama. I, had a promise with that person, so... I will try my best."

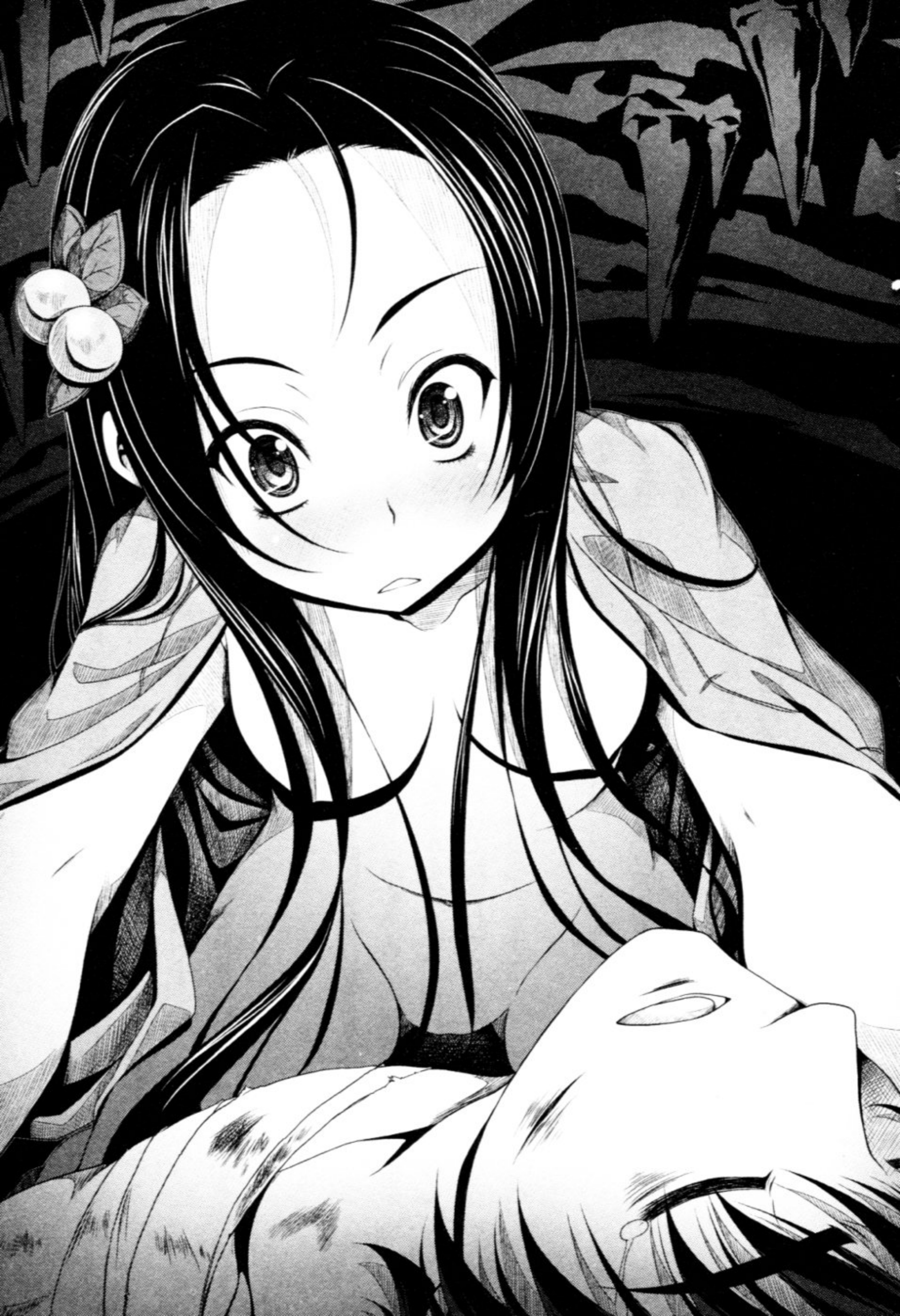
"What a great child."

Slowly, Yoshiharu's body heat began to return.

The thumping of his heart was directly transmitted to Mitsuhide through the skin contact.

Like finally surpassing a mountain top... Mitsuhide who had relaxed finally noticed.

"...I've become strange, my heart... thump, thump, thump is beating non-stop."



Mitsuhide's embarrassment returned immediately.

EHHHHH!?

HUGGING WITH A GUY, N...NA...NAK...NAKED...!?

Th...This fellow, why is he sleeping on my breast so soundly!?

"Ah, Ahhhhh, th...th...thi... What is this, you're bothering me, hurry and let go of me…! Mitsuhide's cute breast aren't meant to be slept on by some gorilla like you!"

Panicking and covering herself with a shirt, Mitsuhide pushed Yoshiharu's head away from her violently.

"....Mama...It's cold."

"You are actually awake, right?" Mitsuhide didn't think twice as she roared like a Kansai person.

"W...Wh...Who is peeking!? Ahh, this is a misunderstanding, Nobuna-sama. If you said, 'So Juubei, you like this Saru~ After picking up Saru who had fainted, you started mumbling to yourself and treated

him like he's yours! Yucks, are you a pervert!?' and starts despising me, if that really happens, then I, Mitsuhide can only choose to commit seppuku.”

I have to get away from this fellow as soon as possible.

"....Mama...It's cold."

"Yes, Yes, Yes, I know! Just a while longer!"

“To have such a thing happening to me, what bad luck ."

Once she thought that the other party was this gorilla, she became so embarrassed. Mitsuhide thought to herself , "This fellow doesn't even have 1% of the human genes, he is a total monkey, monkey, monkey!" but her body was still hot.

"Now that I think of it, at such a time and in such a place, no one will be peeking on us."

Because she felt so embarrassed from hugging Saru, she can't sleep... In her heart, Mitsuhide was blaming Yoshiharu non-stop as she tightens her arms while hugging Yoshiharu and becoming more and more grumpy.

"Ah... Enough of this! Hanzou! Hurry and help!"

But, actually, there were people close to the opening of the cave. Those people gathered after seeing footprints. They were escapee hunting squads.

They numbered over a hundred.

One by one, they gathered at the entrance.

"Ehhh, what's with these people, just go off like this, please return to wherever you came from!"

"Seems like I have to finish them off.... Ahh, I've forgotten my sword!" Mitsuhide tensed up.

From the escapee hunting squad, a voice spoke out.

"So suspicious... Don't tell me, they are Oda army's warriors acting like lovers?"

Eh!?

We've been discovered!?

Mitsuhide had no choice but to put on a "Lovers meeting secretly" play.

Hugging the still sleeping Yoshiharu tightly with both her hands,

Umm... Lovers... Lovers meeting secretly... Are there any lines I can use!?

Anyway, I, Juubei Mitsuhide, before having an affair, I had no experience in love at all! H..H...He...Here, I had to use Tales of G...Ge...Ge...Genji those illicit picture books as reference, ahhh, anything is okay, I must say something!

"Umm, Sagaramaru-sama, Mitsuko, has always admired Sagaramaru-sama!"

There wasn't even aliases, as expected from the careless Mitsuhide.

The movements of the soldiers had stopped.

A little more!

"U...Um, though I have been scolding you, Saru, idiot, useless, but Senpai... Mit... I Mitsuko has always admired Sagaramaru...Umm..."

Mitsuhide was talking to herself, and the guy did not say anything.

"What, is that a monkey play or what?"

Those words...

Uhh....

Mitsuhide was shocked...

"Wh...Wh...Who is the monkey? If anyone's a monkey, it should be Sagara-senpai, no, it definitely is! Ahhh, to think that Mitsuhide is treated the same as this gorilla, ahh, all had come to an end."

At the same time she kissed Yoshiharu's face, unknowingly words came out from Mitsuhide's throat.

"....Senpai, that expression at Kiyomizu temple, that sad expression, just what did Senpai want to tell me!? I, have been thinking about Senpai unknowingly from then on! The one that Senpai wants to protect, and loves, just who is it? It should be Hime-sama, right? Or, Um, maybe Senpai, wants to.. after knowing about my fate, wants to

tell me about that sad fate....? Because knowing that I have such a sad future... and, wanting to protect me... Senpai, is that what you wanted to tell me?"

WH...WH...WHA...WHAT THE HELL AM I TALKING ABOUT!?

Though she wants to stop, though they are in a situation where they could be killed anytime, every cell in Mitsuhide's body seems refuse her control...

"Senpai, save me! I, can't see anything else once I'm fixated on something! I'm easy to be fooled, and don't notice the atmosphere, I will definitely meet with lots of failures in the future! Please, please teach me, keep me from turning into a bad child suddenly..."

Uwahhhh, this isn't the normal things that this smart Juubei would say!!!

Though her senses were shouting, "NO!!!", her body was filled with unstoppable feelings.

"Senpai, during the time at Kiyomizu temple, maybe from then on... towards Sagara-senpai... I have fallen in love with you..."

That sad expression, It was the first time... for me...

Senpai, who was always energetic to the point of troubling others, just what could be the thing that was hidden in his heart... He must have known something, and was hurt by it.

I, want to heal and calm Senpai who had continued to fight with this unspeakable sadness.

In the place of Senpai Oka-sama that he could not meet .

...

Huh?

She felt a stare...

"....Umm, Juubei-chan, what have you been mumbling about from just now...? Ah, don't tell me you are punishing me? Is this one of the '72 methods of bullying'? "

EHHHHHHHHHHHHHH?

Whhhhhy did you wake you, you ero-saruuuuuuuuu!?

Mitsuhide was overcome by an urge to suffocate Yoshiharu, but due to this lovers play that she had to put on, she fell into Yoshiharu's chest and cried.

"Wait, what is going on, don't move around, what if I become excited? Do...Don...Don...Don't tell me you are serious? N...N...No...No matter what, I'm a healthy high school student, if this goes on, I will lose control!"

"Huh? W...Wh...Wh...What the hell are you talking about? H...Ho...How can I...I...I, Mitsuhide say such mushy things to an ero-saru like you! Though if you cried and proposed to me on your knees, 'I like you, please marry me', it's not like I can't consider it for a moment, but the situation now is totally different!"

"Anyway, why must I be the one who proposes to Juubei-chan? No matter what, if you don't let go of me now, things are going to be terrible. I'm telling you now, I'm very tired, but it's separate from my will. Guys who feel the threat of death will want to leave descendants due to instinct, so please...."

"So...So it's like this! It was all just an act! Like this, due to acting, so no matter what I said, they are lies and have nothing to do with anything. What I said just now were ALL lies!"

"Wait, breasts, your breasts are squeezing me! Why are you leaning on me!? Uwahhh, Juubei-chan is broken!? Goemon, save meeeeeee!"

"Ahhh, Sagara-senpai! W...Wh...What is going on, just now, there was something hot, and stiff on my tummy, just what is....."

"Nothing! It's nothing!"

"A...An...Anyway, just continue acting! From now on, what was said are all lies, forget them after listening! Juubei likes Senpai! Senpai is so suitable to that tragic battle! I just want to see your smiling face! As long as it's something I can do, I will do everything for Senpai! If it's Sagara Yoshiharu-senpai, Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide is willing to be an obedient child!"

...

...

Ah...

It's over...

Wanting to say out the words in her mind, she said out the full name on impulse.

Noooo, as expected, Mitsuhide is a straightforward child that has nothing to do with lying and acting!

Anyway,

This isn't the time to stick out the tongue and put on a cute smile.

"Wahh, this can't be! That woman is Akechi Mitsuhide! "

"Then that Sagara-senpai... As expected..."

"Sagara Yoshiharu!"

The soldiers rushed into the cave in an instant.

"It's...It's all over!"

"So that's it, that's what was happening! To not let these soldiers find out, we are acting lovers... I thought for a moment...."

"Wait Gorilla! Why did you sink your head into my breasts again! That's too rude! Anyway, hurry and get up !"

But, Yoshiharu who was too exhausted was still unable to get up.

"...S...Sorry, but it seems like my strength has not returned... Only that area is full of spirit..."

"Ahhh, enough! What a useless Gorilla! You are really a monkey, a useless monkey!"

"....That's embarrassing."

Her two swords were both broken when she had climbed up the crack.

"Damn it, if this goes on...!"

"Sagara-senpai, leave this to me!"

Mitsuhide and Yoshiharu are in a crisis.

Mitsuhide had decided.

Even if it's bare fists, she must protect Senpai, as long as there is still a breath left, she must not let Sagara-senpai suffer anymore injury.

"Bastards! Listen, I'm the descendant of Tsuchizaki Gen, Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide, Koretou Hyuga no Kami!"

Wearing the shirt on her shoulder, Akechi Mitsuhide stood up.

Her heart was naught of fear, and was filled with the thought of protecting Sagara Yoshiharu.

The soldiers were all stunned by Mitsuhide's resolve, and Sagara Yoshiharu's eyes were also attracted by Mitsuhide's courageous look.

Different from Nobuna who shines like a bright sun, Mitsuhide's beauty is as calm and quiet as the moon. A beauty unable to be compared, the firm will that was hidden inside this beauty would not lose to Nobuna.

Yoshiharu can feel instinctively, Mitsuhide warming his body, saying such embarrassing things, those weren't for praises or rewards.

This fellow, even that twisted Nobuna was able to acknowledge her and name her as her successor.

She was indeed... remarkable.

"...Like a fairy that had materialize in the real world..... "

"Wait, we don't know whether it's the real Juubei Mitsuhide and Sagara Yoshiharu, it might be a trap! Everyone, be careful!" shouted a leaderly man from the squad, and that voice, he seemed to have heard it before.

"Roger!"

They were swinging axes, chains and swords.

Those weapons are all swinging around, almost as if they are thirsting for Mitsuhide's flesh.

"Hurry and run, Juubei-chan, don't care about me!"

But Mitsuhide had put on a stance, refusing to retreat even a step.

With the skills of the Kashima Shinto style, this female warrior of unlimited talent and courage would not lose out even during a fist fight.

"I am asking the heavens now. If I follow my fate.... if the meeting between I, Mitsuhide and Sagara Yoshiharu was to end like this, just another sad fate of the sengoku era, then we will not die here! Our meeting, whether it's right or wrong, heavens, please give me an answer!"

But, at this time.

The right shoulder that should have been relocated let out a feeling of pain.

Her right hand could no longer move.

Mitsuhide, made her resolve to die.

~Translator's Notice: For more info on updates, please visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/OdaNobunaLN.Eng/

Chapter 4 : Rout at Mount Hiei

Part 1

Mount Hiei's winter.

Encamped upon the spiritual mountain Mount Hiei, where women are prohibited, the allied Asai and Asakura forces led by Shougakuin Gousei launched an assault during the night. They once again waged a defensive battle, retreating back to Mount Hiei once their situation turned disadvantageous, but that night they received unbelievable news from their scouts.

"Oda Nobuna still lives! She has personally taken command of the Oda army surrounding Mount Hiei, and it looks like they are preparing to burn the whole mountain!"

Asai Hisamasa refused to believe such a report.

Just the fact that Oda Nobuna still lived was shocking enough, but to think that she wanted to attack Mount Hiei?

"Im...Impossible... To burn Mount Hiei!? Mount Hiei has close to 800 years of history! It is the most esteemed

holy mountain in every Japanese Buddhist community!! No no, it is a divine pillar that people have worshiped ever since they believed that Gods live in spiritual mountains."

Hisamasa's words reflected the common sense of this era.

"Is Oda Nobuna crazy? A woman daring to attack mount Hiei is already extremely disrespectful, but now she wants to burn Mount Hiei!?"

Opening up "Tales of Genji" beside him, Asakura Yoshikage exclaimed, "What a crazed girl." as he stared at the moon

"I admit defeat, Oda Nobuna. As expected from a woman proclaiming to conquer the world. You are fundamentally different from the other women of this era ."

"This is not a time to say ‘As expected’, is it?" Hisamasa shouted.

The still composed Asakura Yoshikage sighed, "Oda Nobuna holds the resolve to battle to the end with us, and we were not prepared for her determination at all."

"Listen Hisamasa, Mount Hiei's grounds are flat. It's totally unlike Mount Gifu where one can hold back most any attack. Because we never expected our enemy to attack, we did not make any preparations to defend. If she really attacks us, Mount Hiei is too vulnerable to grant us victory."

Yoshikage continued.

"Our plan has backfired with Oda Nobuna's resolve to ignore Mount Hiei's prohibition of women... If they really start burning Mount Hiei, Oda Nobuna will become the enemy of all Japan's Buddhist communities, and her dream of conquering the world will never be fulfilled. She must know this, yet deciding to burn Mount Hiei anyways, this is becoming exciting...."

"Oda Nobuna really wants to burn Mount Hiei, and is preparing to die with us; is that fellow actually a demon lord? Or is she just a rural girl with no common sense..... I really want to see her with my own eyes --no, I must bring her back with me to Ichijodani...." Asakura Yoshikage's eyes shimmered with an abnormal light as his lips curled into a sneer.

The cowardly Asai Hisamasa had turned deathly pale.

"Th...Thi...This isn't the time to joke around, Yoshikage-dono. Now that you mention it, weren't you the one who chose Mount Hiei as our base? Hurry and do something!"

Yoshikage laughed and snorted, "What an uninteresting fellow."

"Hisamasa, we have three options. The first is to initiate the attack, though it is too late if they start burning. We would have to lead our whole army to battle with the Oda army, using our speed to bet everything on the outcome."

"They might have predicted that we will attack once we received the report of them burning Mount Hiei. If so, they have already prepared their formation and are waiting for us to fall into the trap ourselves. Isn't there a more foolproof plan?"

"Arara... You're quite the paranoid coward..." Yoshikage laughed at Hisamasa before explaining the second plan.

"Our second option is to let the monks of this mountain negotiate with them, telling them that if they

burn Mount Hiei every Buddhist community will rise against the Oda clan. With this in mind, the monks will ask to postpone the battle. If Oda Nobuna isn't truly crazy she is sure to agree to our request, allowing us to retreat back home with no injuries. At the same time however, the once-surrounded Oda army will gain a chance to breath and the situation will stagnate."

"This is truly a safe plan..." Hisamasa mumbled.

"But Yoshikage-dono, what is the last plan?"

"Seeing that there is no chance to win, you surrender to Oda Nobuna. You return your position as head back to Nagamasa who married Oda Nobuna's sister and become a monk. With this, the Asai clan will escape the fate of total annihilation."

"Surrendering is impossible!" Hisamasa jumped to his feet as blood rushed to his head.

"T...To let my son Nagamasa become the conqueror of the world. I've gone so far as to completely betray the Oda clan. Surrendering is not possible at all, Yoshikage-dono!"

This Asai Hisamasa really is an indecisive man. Yoshikage mused.

"Yoshikage-dono, here we should use the second plan! We can't wrap Mount Hiei into this because of us; we should stop the battle and engage with the Oda clan head on later."

Listening to Hisamasa, Tsuchimikado who was sitting at the side laughed, "Ara ara, the despicable betrayer suddenly wants to be ethical. Why not just honestly say that you don't wanna die?"

Shougakuin Gousei, though silent all this time, finally declared, "If that's the case, let me be the missionary to negotiate with the Oda army! Uwahahahaha! Unclean women wanting to burn Mount Hiei. I, Gousei will never let you do as you wish. Besides, the very idea of a truce formed on equal terms makes me sick to my stomach. Just let me shout, 'Girls, kneel in front of me!' and demand their surrender."

Gousei's words became only more heated as he continued "This main hall houses the 'Holy Flame' that

has been burning for more than 800 years. We must protect it. I, Gousei will never let those crazy bitches do as they like. I won't let them burn Mount Hiei!"

"Shoukaguin Gousei, the self-declared enemy of all women, if this disillusioned and petty guy becomes the missionary... It will really be interesting if the negotiating of the truce fails." Yoshikage sneered.

Part 2

"Hanbei-dono, please wake up! If you don't stop Hime-sama....!"

Kyoto, Myoukaku Temple.

Nene tried her best to shake Hanbei awake.

Manase Belchior who prescribed the medicine to Hanbei said, "It's regrettable, but I think she still needs a few days." and tried to stop Nene many times, but Nene was not willing to give up.

Now that Yoshiharu and Juubei couldn't return, Nene's last hope was the genius strategist Hanbei, and she refused to give up.

"Hime-sama woke up, but because of Onii-sama's death she ordered Mount Hiei burned together with the Asai and Asakura allied forces in a fit of anger! She won't listen to the advice of her retainers at all! Now, the only one who could stop Hime-sama is Hanbei-dono!" Nene shouted as her hands shook Hanbei's body... She didn't even notice the tears flowing from her eyes.

"...Uhh...Uhhh... Onii-sama and Akechi-sama can't come back anymore... Goemon-dono isn't here either... If even Hanbei-dono doesn't wake up, Nene... Nene doesn't know what else to do anymore....."

A single tear fell onto Hanbei's corpse-like body.

And then...

"...Nene-sama... What you said just now, is that true?"

Hanbei finally opened her eyes.

"Hanbei-dono! You've woken up!"

The tear stricken Nene hugged Hanbei tightly.

It came true...

Of Nene's countless prayers while she cleansed herself with cold water, one of them had finally been heard by the heavens.

"Nene-sama, Manase-sama, please tell me what has happened."

"Hanbei-sama! If you don't hurry and stop Hime-sama , things are going to get bad!"

Behind Nene, there was a heavily built man with a single namban monocle and a blonde haired sister with a cross hanging on her chest. The sister explained "After losing both Sagara-sama and Akechi-sama at the same time, Hime-sama lost her senses. Though it's just desserts for those monks who are so arrogant to take up arms and challenge the Oda clan, for the dream of conquering the world, Hime-sama's plan of burning Mount Hiei is just too reckless!"

The man wearing a monocle was the merchant, Imai Sougyu.

"I've heard that Mount Hiei holds the highest place of learning in Buddhism in all of Japan. We can't just burn

the valuable treasures full of knowledge. Even though the monks at Mount Hiei have forgotten their place and taken up arms, we can just disarm them!"

The sister was Louis Frois, who had permission to build Namban churches in Kyoto.

The two of them had rushed over after hearing Nobuna's sudden change, planning to drop by Myoukaku Temple to talk with Sagara Yoshiharu before going to meet Nobuna. Instead, they learned of Yoshiharu's death from Nene.

"Hanbei-dono, no matter what, please persuade Hime-sama!"

"Everyone, tell me all that has happened while I was unconscious!"

The crafty Hanbei instantly understood what had happened and what may happen in the future.

Whether it was the result of Manase Belchior's treatment or Nene's prayers that moved the heavens, the fever that had tortured Hanbei was totally gone and Hanbei had a clear head now.

"I understand. Everyone, we need to go to the front camp now to rectify Nobuna-sama's misunderstanding."

"Misunderstanding?"

"According to my deductions, Yoshiharu-sama did not die at Mizusaka Ridge."

"What is this about, Hanbei-dono?" Nene asked loudly .

"I will explain to Nobuna-sama the specifics. Nene-sama, please wait here for Yoshiharu-sama's return ... Yoshiharu-sama will definitely return!"

Caressing the shivering Nene's hair as she mumbled, " Onii-sama is still alive...?", Hanbei smiled.

"Of course, because Yoshiharu-sama isn't a bad guy who would suddenly die and abandon such a cute sister. "

Part 3

The preparations for burning Mount Hiei had been completed.

Half of the Oda army, under the command of Niwa Nagahide, Shibata Katsuie and Maeda Inuchiyo, was stationed at Sakamoto facing Mount Hiei. In truth, they were chased away by Matsunaga Hisahide because she rejected the plan to burn Mount Hiei.

The rest of the army was concentrated at Kyoto, at Nobuna's base on Mica Slope.

The night's air was dry and windy.

The conditions were ideal for a fire.

Nobuna sat on the bench in her base, silently staring at the map in front of her.

Time had not yet healed the wound on her abdomen, and occasionally a surge of pain washed over her. Nobuna however could no longer distinguish whether this pain was sent from the wound, or from her own heart.

Matsunaga Hisahide stayed at Nobuna's side like a mother and fed her the drug frequently.

"The preparations are all finished. We will reduce Mount Hiei to ashes tonight, Nobuna-sama; please give the order."

"....Dearuka."

Hisahide did not change Nobuna totally into her puppet like she did with Kuchiki Shinano, because if she did so she would destroy Nobuna's heart. Hisahide, who doted on Nobuna like her own daughter, refused do that to her.

But Hisahide pressed the confused and hurting Nobuna to keep taking the drug, calling it a "painkiller", as she whispered words of vengeance.

"Let all people of the world know there aren't any gods or Buddhas. Burn Mount Hiei to a pile of ashes."

"We must kill all those fallen monks who treat women as if they aren't human, kill all of them."

"Those enemies who had taken your beloved, we need to let them know their foolishness for defying the conqueror of the world. We must make them regret being born into this world."

With these poisonous words she had stolen Nobuna’s will, unintentionally making her little more than a puppet.

If this continued, Nobuna's heart would be consumed by this drug Hisahide prepared. Eventually, she would become a puppet without any sense of self.

But Hisahide, seeing Nobuna as her own daughter, was overcome with the desire to heal Nobuna's feelings and blinded to her actions.

I don’t know how to truly heal Nobuna’s great suffering, but I can at least make it my mission to kill off all of her enemies. Hisahide could only think.

But, Nobuna was trapped by the pain and sadness of losing both Yoshiharu and Mitsuhide and an immense fury towards Asai Hisamasa's betrayal that led to their deaths.

It’s all fine now... The dream of conquering the world, or the dream of sailing the world... Without Saru and Juubei, there is no longer any meaning to those dreams anymore.

"Come, Nobuna-sama. Take these corrupt monks who used Buddhism to do whatever they want and plunge them into the depths of despair. Whether it's Asai Asakura who stole your beloved from you, or those fallen monks, burn all of them right now. Please give the order for the attack!"

Nobuna, caressed by the smiling Hisahide thought, *Yes... Those bastards who stole my most important person... those companions that shared my dream... If I don't kill them all... the revenge for Saru and Juubei... I can't take it anymore...*, her heart was slowly sinking into darkness.

Nobuna's cold eyes lost their focus as she glanced at the sky as she mumbled.

".....Troops, burn... Mount Hiei..."

Just at that instant when Nobuna gave the order to attack,

"PLEASE WAIT!!!"

Takenaka Hanbei ran into the camp gasping for breath .

Accompanying her were Imai Sougyu and Frois.

"Nobuna-sama! Mount Hiei is both this country's ancient authority and symbol of Buddhism throughout Japan. If we set it ablaze, all the Buddhist communities will rise up against Nobuna-sama! And, if we were seen as enemies to the Osaka Honneko temple, which has a shocking amount of worshipers, then Nobuna-sama's dream of conquering the world will be delayed at least 10 years!"

Hanbei, who had rarely ever been brave, tried her best to persuade Nobuna, resolving to stake her life on her decision.

"And if you do that, you will lose the support of the people! Though it's a fact that those monks have fallen to a hopeless level, the common people do not know of this! They... They will just see Nobuna-sama as a cruel sixth demon lord who killed the buddha! And the Tendaizasu of Mount Hiei is the elder brother of Himiko-sama, if you burn Mount Hiei, the kingdom will lose their trust in Nobuna-sama too! All of Japan will treat Nobuna-sama as an enemy!"

Nobuna looks at Hanbei's face wordlessly.

She still can't think properly.

....Am I still wandering in the dream world....? Or... But... Enough, Things like Tenka Fubu... it's already... meaningless... If I don't have the ambition for Tenka Fubu, Saru or Juubei won't die... If I don't... act now... Saru and Juubei's revenge.....

Nobuna, her mind clouded with drugs, had lost normal decision-making skills.

That which controlled Nobuna now was only her tremendous fury.

"Nobuna-sama! Please wake up!"

Hisahide narrowed her eyes and scolded Hanbei, " Shut your mouth, this battle is to take revenge for your master, Sagara Yoshiharu."

But Hanbei did not stay silent.

"Matsunaga-sama, the one who should shut up is you! I noticed just now what you have been feeding Nobuna-sama. Nobuna-sama isn't your puppet!"

"It's just medicine to kill the pain, but... This medicine cannot heal the pain in Nobuna's heart. If Nobuna-sama

doesn't kill off all of her enemies, her pain will never go away!"

Dearuka... As expected, this is... a continuation of the nightmare too.... Nobuna thought dreamily.

"....When once you served Miyoshi Nagayoshi-sama, you fed your master huge amounts of drugs, then coerced the confused Nagayoshi-sama to kill off those retainers who were loyal to him! Maybe, you already have plans to kill Shibata-sama, Niwa-sama and the aide Inuchiyo-sama? After finishing this battle and burning Mount Hiei, you will continue to isolate Nobuna-sama.... That is not an act of loyalty!"

Matsunaga Hisahide snorts at Hanbei's words, coldly replying, "I'm confused by what you said. Isn't it the responsibility of a servant to reduce the master's pain?"

"Those are two different matters! We should bet our own lives to stop our master when she starts walking onto the wrong path. This is the responsibility of us retainers as well! And, though I don't know if Akechi-sama is safe, Yoshiharu-sama wasn't killed by the Shikigamis at Mizusaka Ridge!"

Nobuna-sama's face changed to shock.

Is this a dream... A continuation of a dream...? Or... reality.. ..?

They seem to be saying things like Yoshiharu is still alive,

If that's true... I hope this is reality,

But, Nobuna no longer held the courage to believe that this was reality.

If once again she could sigh, "I am really happy." and show her relief to live in such a world, someone whispered to her again, "It's all a dream."... She didn't want to experience that despair again.

Scared, I'm so scared.....

"....Saru is still living... What is going on?"

"I, Hanbei couldn't go along with Yoshiharu-sama due to my illness, so, I asked Zenki-sama to take care of him before he went out. And, Goemon also went along with him to save Asai Nagamasa-sama. Hattori Hanzou himself was inside the back troops Yoshiharu-sama was leading in the 'Retreat of Kanegasaki'. After that, Matsudaira-sama and Akechi-sama went to rescue

Yoshiharu-sama and witnessed Yoshiharu's death... With these clues, the mystery is now solved!"

".....Mystery?"

"Yoshiharu-sama was born and lived in a peaceful era without any wars, and thus is a very kind and gentle person. He isn't someone who could coldly watch his important companions die one by one without doing anything. But, he also isn't one who would throw away his own life to protect his important companions, least of all his most precious Hime-sama. This person is someone who never gives up. An insatiable, greedy person; no matter what, he will grab it with his hands! So....."

Nobuna is confused.

Hanbei's words, were they spoken in reality, or... As expected, this was still a dream.

Maybe, the wishes in her heart became the form of Hanbei, consoling her with false hope.

Or maybe,

Just maybe....

"Nobuna-sama, in the kouga ninja arts there was a trick named ‘Finely Hidden’. Rumor has it that in this trick a substitute is used to replace the master, and that substitute is blown to pieces for his own master, a cruel ninja art. Because the substitute was blown to pieces, there would be no way to see the real identity of the body. Tsuchimikado would never do such a thing like blowing up Yoshiharu-sama, who could be exchanged for a reward, so I think Hanzou-sama hid the fact of blowing up Yoshiharu's substitute. Of course, Yoshiharu-sama would never do a cruel thing like asking one of his companion die for him, but luckily there was someone very suitable for this task inside the back troops . He is....."

Hanbei took out a talisman and threw it into the air in front of Nobuna.

Shikigami, summon.

Zenki with his fox face appeared in front of Nobuna.

"Oh, isn't this the Oda clan's Hime-sama?" Zenki knelt down onto the floor.

"Ahh, it's as Hanbei-dono said, even if I am blown to pieces, I won't die at all. So I performed this ‘Finely

Hidden’ trick together with Hanzou, to see if we could deceive that Tsuchimikado. Thanks to Akechi Mitsuhide's sudden appearance, Tsuchimikado's attention was drawn away and the trick worked, it seems ."

Nobuna still muttered, "This is a dream, I'm deceiving myself with another dream.", and didn't seem to believe it at all.

".....Saru is still alive...? Th... Then why didn't someone report to me immediately?"

"Ohh, my master, Hanbei-dono had been unconscious all this while, and I can't materialize here without being summoned, so we couldn't report even if we wanted to.

"If this isn't a dream... then where is Hattori Hanzou....? Where is Takechiyo....? Why didn't anyone tell me anything... those two....?"

"I'm afraid Hattori Hanzou-sama hid the ‘Finely Hidden’ trick while in the midst of the enemy territory. It ’s likely he only revealed the truth once he had escorted his master safely back to Kyoto." Hanbei said.

"....If that's the case, where are they now... Takechiyo....?"

"Yes, Matsudaira-dono is someone who cherishes her friends, so I'm afraid that she set out immediately to save Yoshiharu-sama hidden in the ground after hearing the truth. Now she must be leading quite an amount of troops in the mountains of western Omi."

"....Really... Is that true....?"

Matsunaga Hisahide scolded, "Aren't all of these merely your deductions?"

Before Hanbei could respond, a new voice cut through the discussion.

"Yes, yes, it's like this~! Because we were in a hurry, we forgot to leave a letter to Kichi-nee-san to say the truth~"

"......Hattori Hanzou, here! It was quite a hassle, but because the back troops who had returned to Kyoto safely immediately volunteered to join us in our rescue mission, our mission has now been accomplished!"

"I...I...I...I...I'm so sorry, Kichi-nee-san! So many things had happened. I had not even brought any troops from Kyoto over to Mizusaka Ridge previously."

The tanuki eared Matsudaira Motoyasu and the darkly attired Hattori Hanzou had returned to the camp.

And right at their heels,

"You've done it, commander! We had always believed in you!"

"Until the commander returns to Hime-sama, he is invincible!"

"We of the back troops, a total of 150 surviving, are now commander's loyal retainers!"

"From now on, our lives are tied to your will, commander Yoshiharu!"

"Ohoh, you finally survived back to Kyoto!"

It's these idiots who have miraculously survived through the "Retreat of Kanegasaki" yet returned to western Omi without rest to save Yoshiharu.

These were the companions from the back troops.

All of them had countless wounds on them, but their expressions were as bright as the sun.

"The mission with our lives on the line has finally finished!"

"We finally let Hime-sama and commander Yoshiharu survive and meet again in this world!"

"Those companions who died must be feeling elated too."

Each and every one, their faces were filled with cheerfulness and satisfaction.

But....

"It's fake... This is a dream. I... had a very similar dream just recently, didn't I? I know. This is a dream. This is just a dream... No words can describe it, it's still all dark. So this is it, this is a dream that I wish for... A dream that would never happen... Hope that was lost, a future that will never come... This is just that...."

Nobuna still can't wake up from the dream world alone.

And....

"Ah, as expected... This is a dream."

From these sweaty men, a young man that was in even more tatters than the rest of them walked in front of Nobuna.

"Hurry and kiss Hime-sama, commander!"

"It's good to be young! It's good to be young!"

"I know I know! You guys, stop this plan of burning Mount Hiei right now!"

Sagara.... Yoshiharu...

A dream, it can't be anything else...

But,

Even if it's a dream, an illusion...

It’s okay if it’s fake...

Even if I can’t wake up anymore, even if my body was destroyed...

Even if that happens, all of it doesn’t matter.

Even that, is a good thing.

I almost can’t see through my tears.

Even so, I wish to meet this man again.

"...I, am still dreaming. Saru should have died and not come back anymore..."

"Oi, Nobuna? Why are your eyes so misty!? What is going on, it's me! Sagara Yoshiharu!? Hi, it's me. ME! OI!"

"....Dream? A dream again... Uhh, Uhh...."

"Anyway, Nobuna....? What is with you, why do you look so sad? Your appearance is weird!? Don't tell me, don't tell me you are regretting again!? Or, or you are crying because you regret the decision to kiss with me!?"

Yoshiharu walked nearer.

A step,

And another step.

Just like a real living Yoshiharu,

If this is a dream, let me never wake up forever.... Nobuna prayed.

"Huh... To close your eyes, Oi Nobuna, open your eyes !"

With a *piak*, her face was slapped.

Strange, this was a dream, yet it feels painful.... Nobuna felt strange.

"Yoshiharu-sama, Nobuna-sama drank too much of the drug that Matsunaga-sama prepared. She seems to not be able to distinguish her dreams from reality... But, I believe if it's Yoshiharu-sama, you will definitely be able to bring Nobuna-sama back to the real world, *Sob*Sob*" Hanbei informed Yoshiharu.

"Geez, I tried my best and finally returned here after all that trouble, but there's no helping it! Ok, Nobuna! In the western fairytales, a sleeping beauty can only be

woken up with a prince's kiss! Well, though I'm a monkey prince from the monkey country....."

Eh...?

This is...

Don't tell me, he wants to kiss me?

His lips are getting nearer...

Wait,

Wait a minute...

There's still so many people watching, and at such a place,

Ah....

But because this is a dream, so it does not matter.

Even if I kiss Yoshiharu, no one will blame me, right?

So...

So... Anything he wants then.

"....."

Nobuna did not resist.

Closing her eyes, she waits for Yoshiharu's lips

“Go! Commander! Go! Commander!”

Those companions from the back troops started cheering.

"Nobuna? N...Not running away? Th...there's no helping it then... If that's the case... I'm taking the reward! "

At that instant when their lips were about to touch,

- Inhale*

The overly anxious Yoshiharu did a big sneeze.

...

Uwahh?

This... This stench is....?

Takoyaki....!?

"Isn't this... This isn't the Saru from my dream!? The Yoshiharu in my dreams will never have such a nauseating stench from his mouth just before kissing!"

In Nobuna’s vision, though she still wandered in a dark dream, a light appeared in an instant.

It took the shape of "Smelly Saru with takoyaki".

"What is most unacceptable is that piece of vegetable stuck between Saru's front teeth; that's the worst!" The emptiness inside Nobuna from Hisahide’s drug disappeared in that instant.

This isn’t a dream!?

So...So as to say... This fellow is the real Saru, and those "Go!" "Go for it!" "Kiss her!" soldiers are all... real!?!?

Nobuna’s pale face flushed bright red immediately.

"Eh....EHHHHHH!?"

- Bham*

Nobuna who had regained her consciousness hurriedly gave Yoshiharu's nose a headbutt.

"Ow...Ouchhhhh!? What the hell are you doing!?"

Without any lapse, Yoshiharu's nostrils were pierced with two fingers.

"GO AND DIEEEEEEE!"

And then,

"To try to steal my lips when I'm not conscious, you ERO-SARU!"

"If we do that now, we can't hide it from the retainers!" Nobuna fiercely released a combo technique towards Yoshiharu.

First, she gave Yoshiharu's right face a tight slap.

- Piak*

"Wait... It's me, I'm just taking the reward as per promised....."

But, these words were totally useless in front of Nobuna's combo.

"Sh...SHUT UP! In the teachings of Christianity, isn't it said that if your right cheek is hit, then you present your left!? So, prepare yourself to be beaten up obediently!"

Yoshiharu's left face received a slap soon.

"Nobuna-sama? That isn't what that means... Vio... Violence isn't good."

Frois ran over in a hurry and hugged Yoshiharu.

"Frois-chan! This violent woman is too much! I just wanted the promised reward... Why did I have to go through such a thing!? Ahh, this world is full of darkness ....!"

"It's alright now, Yoshiharu, it's alright now."

Watching Yoshiharu use Frois's well endowed body to comfort himself, Nobuna believed it in an instant.

This is it.

This is without doubt, the real and only world.

Because... In the dream, Saru will only look at me.

But... The real Saru is a hopeless fellow who is obsessed over Riku and Frois' cow-like breasts!

So, there's a need to discipline him!

"This ero-saru, hurry and get away from Frois!"

"Don't wanna! You will never understand. I, who was cheated by you who renegade on your promises! As the replacement for your lips, I want to be nursed by Frois's warm breasts, like a baby!"

"Um, Yoshiharu-sama? Pl...Please don't rub my breasts like this...."

"Uwahhh! What are you doing, traitor! Pervert! HURRY AND GET THE HELL AWAY FROM FROIS'S BREAST NOWWWWWW!"

Without thinking, Nobuna sent a kick to the twisting ass of Yoshiharu as she tried to suppress the urge to cry out.

This isn't a dream.

This isn't a dream!

It's true!

The real Yoshiharu had returned!

"You did it commander! Right after getting beaten by Hime-sama, you dove straight into sister-sama's breasts, what a high standard!!!"

"As expected from the world's no 1 pervert!"

"This is Sagara Yoshiharu!"

"You guys, control yourself, we are still holding a military meeting!"

At this time...

"Wait a minute! The one who saved gorilla-senpai and allowed him to scrape through is me, Juubei Mitsuhide! Everyone, why have you forgotten all about Mitsuhide!?"

That wide forehead.

The kumquat that had served as an accessory was missing, most likely eaten due to thirst during the journey,

Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide kicked away the back troops soldiers as if she were walking through nothing and forcefully came in between Frois and Yoshiharu.

"....Juubei!? You're still alive too!?"

"What is with ‘too’, Nobuna-sama! The useless Hattori Hanzou let gorilla-senpai stay underground and retreated from Mizusaka Ridge, I, Mitsuhide replaced him to help gorilla-senpai! Without this genius Juubei Mitsuhide, senpai would already be a corpse buried in the ground!"

Hanzou was taken aback. “Don't tell me, you survived after dropping into such a huge crack... Even seasoned ninjas will most likely perish after experiencing such a situation... The tenacity of Akechi Mitsuhide is as terrifying as that of a roach.”

“Maybe, this lass had some strange destiny awaiting her!?” Hanzou mumbled with a rare frightened expression.

"Well, those back troops soldiers that disguised themselves as escapee hunters did help me and senpai who were hiding in the cave, so I won't pursue the matter of Hanzou and Matsudaira-dono abandoning Mitsuhide and running off by themselves."

Exactly, those escapee hunters who attacked Mitsuhide and Yoshiharu in the cave were actually those companions that had escaped back to Kyoto but headed back in, led by Hanzou and Matsudaira. Their speech had been covered with the Owari accent, but Mitsuhide and Yoshiharu had not noticed that at all, most likely due to the seriousness of the situation.

The experts that were standing at the forefront of the group were ninjas from the Hattori squad.

Were those people hiding in the caves real, or were they a trap? To confirm this, they had to act like escapee hunters to the end.

The companions from the back troops started whispering to each other.

"Damn it, we didn't notice it was the two of them at the start, but now it’s just like we’re peeking."

"We noticed that only in the middle... that it was the two of them."

"Though we don't know how, the atmosphere seemed strange. Without knowing it, we let them continue on."

"What a waste, if we waited just a little more, Uwahahaha."

"If I'd have know that earlier, I wouldn't have acted in such a humiliating monkey play no matter what... I regret it! You guys, forget all of it!"

"It's right there in our heads, and we will never forget it, UWAHAHAHA!"

"Precisely, so don't mind us at all."

"You guys! That was all a fake! FORGET ALL OF IT NOW! If you dare leak out even a word, I will kill all of you!"

Under Mitsuhide fierce stare, they became silent and shivered.

"Monkey play... What kind of play is that...?" Nobuna can't help but feel curious, but, it does not matter anymore.

It's not a dream. The real Yoshiharu and Mitsuhide survived and have come back to my side. That alone is enough.

"So I say, Nobuna, hurry and stop this plan of burning Mount Hiei! As you've seen, both Juubei and I are alive and well! I'll say this first, we are not ghosts or illusions or anything like that!"

"Ahh...Hmmm."

Yoshiharu's voice awakened the moved Nobuna and, straightening her back, she slowly stood up from the bench.

"Anyway, I went berserk just now so suddenly, but I had promised Saru! Kiss... Nan...The Nanban word is kiss, right? If... If I don't kiss with him...."

Though she wants to fulfill the promise right now and kiss Yoshiharu, the retainers are all watching from the side. "T...To think that my lips will be stolen by this Saru. .. St...Stop joking... I don't wanna, but since I've promised

him... And without Saru's back troops, we would all have been killed... But, but like I thought, if it's not when we're alone...."

Nobuna held back her tears, forcing down the urge to hug Yoshiharu.

"NOOOO! Now I must concentrate and try to break out of this situation. Giving Saru his reward... That can wait till we are alone!" Everyone was cheering, "Come and cry it out, hurry and cry it out, hug Saru now." As blood rushed towards her head and everyone is staring... "How can I cry out now!"

The urge to hug Yoshiharu tightly and cry into his chest was so strong that it's almost unbearable, but she must endure it. Nobuna bit her lips.

"....Hm...Hmph! Even so, as expected of Saru, you are much more capable in the wilderness!"

"Idiot! How can I die so simply like that!"

Yoshiharu laughed.

That vegetable that was jammed between his front teeth was revealed again.

Comparing this to Asai Nagamasa's elegant smile was like comparing shit to a moon. "Of course Yoshiharu is the shit.", the difference is obvious; he had no relationship whatsoever with the word "elegance".

Maybe, the real Saru... She can't help but think.

He's totally different from the Yoshiharu in my dreams.

"So disgusting..." Nobuna mumbled as her face blushed.

"Eh? What did you say? I'm sorry but I didn't hear it!"

"I said, you are getting more disgusting every time I look!"

"What a totally uncalled for criticism and malicious tongue... But, it's the normal Oda Nobuna once again, ahh, that's good!"

Looking at Yoshiharu's energetic smiling face,

Nobuna's body... She felt a warm strength flowing out from the depths of her body, and was filled with that strength.

She was right in the middle of a crisis, pinned down at Mount Hiei, but...

There was not a trace of fear in Nobuna's heart.

With this, she could finally live with Yoshiharu in the same world. A dream had been fulfilled.

Though it's a crisis, I'm no longer alone now.

At this world, I've met someone that will be with me.

With just this thought,

She felt an inexhaustible strength.

She felt she could, and she would definitely break through this dangerous situation.

".....Nobuna-sama, this is for soothing the senses, please drink this."

Matsunaga Hisahide held out the drug slowly to Nobuna's lips, but Yoshiharu shouted, "Wait, wait!" and snatched the drug away.

"Hisahide! Don't let Nobuna drink such a weird medicine from now on! Before meeting me, wasn't Nobuna in a dazed state!? Your medicine is too suspicious!"

"Saru, without Danjo's medicine, I would have died from the gunshot wound. I might have drank too much, but don't pursue the matter on my account."

"If you say so. Ok, Hisahide. Please don't do such a dangerous thing from now on!"

"Understood... Nobuna-sama isn't someone I can manipulate."

After being scolded by Yoshiharu, the stunned Hisahide obediently admitted her mistake and retreated. This gave Yoshiharu a shock.

".....Nobuna-sama is a strong child, and... It seems she found a ‘medicine’ far stronger than my Persian drug, huh? The medicine I've prepared is totally useless, hoho."

"Huh? Nobuna's medicine? What do you mean?"

".....Geez... What a blockhead!"

Hisahide refused to continue, buttoning her mouth closed.

"Wait, it's not what you think, don't say anymore, Danjo!" Nobuna rushed to stop Hisahide.

With this, the plan to burn Mount Hiei was stopped.

Nobuna then immediately called back the retainers that were chased out of the camp.

"Sa...Sa...Sa...Saru, Mi...Mi...Mitsuhide are still alive? Ah, Ah, Legs, yes, are there legs?"

While crying and trembling, they confirmed that Yoshiharu and Mitsuhide had legs.

"Yesyesyes, they are alive! If that's the case, you... Hurry and stop Hime's berserk actions!"

"Hurray! Not a ghost, not a ghost!" Shibata Katsuie was so happy that she started waving her arms and legs in a wild, uncoordinated dance. Because she was a bit too happy though, she ended up kicking away the soldiers beside her.

"From now on, we need to negotiate with Mount Hiei. We aren't out of this crisis... But just from seeing both of your expressions, hmmm. Full points." Niwa Nagahide said with a quiet laugh. Her eyes hide traces of barely held tears.

"....I'm hungry... Kumquat, lemme eat it."

Inuchiyo reached out her hand towards Mitsuhide's accessory, but Mitsuhide shouted, "N.O.P.E!" and rejected immediately.(!)

After that, Yoshiharu was able to persuade them to make up.

With this, other than Goemon who was rescuing the imprisoned Nagamasa and Nobusumi, all the retainers of the Oda clan had finally reunited at Nobuna's side.

"Everyone! Though I want to celebrate Saru and Juubei's return, we are still pinned down by the Asai Asakura allied forces! If this goes on, the Miyoshi and Rokoku clans will definitely attack Kyoto from behind. Once the shogun Imagawa Yoshimoto is captured, we lose! Are there any good plans?"

"Once it starts snowing, the Asakura troops will have no choice but to retreat back to Echizen..." Yoshiharu nodded and said.

"Compared to Shikoku, the Miyoshi clan is more likely to advance from Settsu. At the same time, Kouga will lead the Rokoku to attack Southern Omi, sealing off our main path connecting Kyoto and Mino." Imai Sougyu explained. His information came from his rival, Tsuda Soukyu. Though Tsuda Soukyu had once used Konoe Sakihisa's plan to defeat Nobuna, he was currently supporting Nobuna's actions outwardly, but this may all have been a farce to hide his own ambitions.

"Dearuka, though it's regrettable that we fell into the enemy's trap... now isn't the time to regret. What we should do now is lure the Asai and Asakura allied forces out from Mount Hiei and battle it out with them, but these irritating fellows are being difficult."

"Uwahhh, don't tell me I can never return to Mikawa!? "

"Don't worry, Takechiyo, I will break out of this situation no matter what."

"Though we may say that, we are out of options if this goes on. 20 points."

Just when all of them are thinking about a way.....

"Mount Hiei's missionary request an audience!"

"By the request of Tendaizasu to protect Mount Hiei, I, Shougakuin Gousei am here to seek a surrender from these female warriors!"

A heavy-set man appeared, a noxious stench of alcohol emanating from his whole body.

"That fellow tried to ambush us in the night but was defeated by Katsuie, and then escaped back to Mount Hiei."

"Using the rule of ‘Prohibiting girls’ as a shield and not knowing any shame, what a rough and cowardly man. 0 points."

"Just what does he think girls are!? Unforgivable!"

Though Nobuna and the rest put on a disgruntled expression, Gousei started talking seemingly without a care in the world.

"What a chaotic era this is, what anarchy, unclean girls holding weapons and fighting with men... How regrettable and pathetic."

Gousei said such things and rejected the tea brought forth by Inuchiyo, bluntly saying once more, "Unclean."

"...If that's so, please eat some Uiroumochi." Inuchiyo endured as she held up the plate.

"It might be poisoned." Gousei kicked the plate away, not even wanting to touch it with his hands, and continued bellowing like he didn't care about the situation.

"Asai Hisamasa-dono and Asakura Yoshikage-dono could not tolerate your actions of burning the holy Mount Hiei. Oda Nobuna, I'm now giving you the chance to surrender to us. State your conditions."

"He's just a missionary, yet he knows no shame...." Katsuie whispered to Yoshiharu at her side.

Nobuna replied with a composed face. "Rather than surrendering, how about we negotiate on equal terms!? We have a few conditions on our side."

"First, hand over Sugitani Zenjuubou who tried to assassinate me. It could hardly be pleasant if the rumors were to spread of an assassin hiding in a holy mountain used by monks for training."

"Hmph, that is impossible. That useless Sugitani Zenjuubou has been exiled from Mount Hiei. We do not know where he has gone."

"Dearuka. Well, I don't really care about that fellow, but there is no leeway in the next three conditions."

"What!? But, I will listen to you nevertheless, Uwahahahaha."

"First, give us that Omyouji who acts like a thief, sneaking into the ‘Retreat of Kanegasaki’ and almost killing Saru and Juubei, that Tsuchimikado!"

"....Hmph... I see, It's okay, if it's just handing him over."

He agreed rather easily... Maybe there's a trap somewhere... ? Nobuna started to have doubts, but now isn't the time to hesitate.

"Second, Mount Hiei must sign an agreement to never help the Asai and Asakura clans, and will disarm all monks from this day forth and return the disciples back to the original tasks of a monk."

"What is this, disarm!? Are you an idiot? How is that sort of thing possible!?"

"Refusing is not an option! Originally, monks should not take up arms. Isn't your job to worship Buddha and save the common folk to get closer to the essence of Buddhism? If you love fights, how about you go become a soldier!? As a soldier, I will not object to you going to war for the conquest of unifying the world. Those men who are not willing to stop being a monk, yet still want to wave weapons around, you guys are just too shameful !"

The female warriors of the Oda clan stare at Gousei silently.

“Uwahh, what is with this pressure, just a few of them were able to produce such an immense pressure.” Gousei replied with difficulty, his face breaking out in a sweat.

"Do you agree? If you don't disarm completely and stop supporting both the Asai and Asakura, you monks will be burned to ashes! This is not a threat! It's a final warning!"

"You truly mean that the Monks will not spared?"

"You are monks in appearance, but aren't you guys just soldiers grouped together and pretending to be monks!? Waging war means people die, no matter what side they’re on! To us warriors, we are betting our own lives on this battle! Just attacking us one-sidedly, daring us to retaliate so you can use your bullshit reasoning, saying we were disrespectful towards Buddha; we don't take that kind of bullshit here!"

"But... Monks without any weapons who have not broken any rules, monks that are high in moral values should be plentiful on Mount Hiei, shouldn’t they?"

In actual fact, we chased away all those monks when they started lecturing us... Gousei thought in his heart, as his tone can't help but shake a bit.

But, the next words from Nobuna gave Gousei an even bigger shock.

"Those monks who ignored all your wrongs for all these years, they are all guilty!"

"Yo...You really don't you have any respect towards Buddhism, do you!? You deserve heavenly punishment, you brat!"

"Wrong! What I don't respect are those hypocrites and despicable bastards who hide behind the symbol of Buddhism as they do all kinds of bad things! If there really is a God or Buddha, they will never punish me for punishing these villains for them."

"That's why I say... It's because you have ideas like that that we reason with you at all..." Gousei mumbled.

"Then, this is the last condition! This is the most important one, I'll never compromise on this."

"There is more!? What is it this time, what's the third condition?"

"The place to sign the peace agreement must be at... The main hall of Mount Hiei! I will personally go into Mount Hiei and sign it!"

"That is the one thing I could never allow!!" Gousei shouted with fury as he stood up violently.

"Stop joking, you damn brat! You namban lover and punishment deserving fool! The main hall is a holy place that has housed and worshipped the 'Holy Flame' for several centuries. To Mount Hiei, it's like the heart, the most holy place of all! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ALLOW UNCLEAN WOMEN IN IT!"

Part 4

Negotiations broke down.

"What the hell are you doing? It's just a little more, isn't it ok if I sign the agreement on your behalf?"

"Shut up Saru. A guy like you won't understand, but doing things like prohibiting women in this new era that has accepted namban culture... We will be too outdated if we continue treating women as unclean! That fallen monk's expression seemed to say, 'Ahh, because of all the female warriors, the air here had become dirty...', and it pisses me off. I can't help it if I just subconsciously add another condition!"

"Setting a new condition subconsciously!? Control yourself a little; if this goes on, our efforts at the 'Retreat of Kanegasaki' will be wasted!"

Gousei interrupted without a trace of fear, "Inferior women will never enter the main hall, on this I will never compromise. If you don't like it, feel free to cut off my head, but can you girls do it? Uwahahahaha!" while looking at Nobuna and Yoshiharu's couple quarrel.

"Though I can understand Hime-sama's feelings, it won't be good if the negotiations break down, 8 points."

"They are the monks of the holy Mount Hiei, but to enforce a rule like prohibiting women, they are totally treating us like fools! Even if they are disarmed now, they might rise up and become our enemy again using

the reason of prohibiting women. We should just burn them after all!"

"Actually, this incident was caused by the Asai and Asakura clan using this rule of Mount Hiei. So, as long as this rule exist, Mount Hiei will very likely be the base for any anti-Nobuna forces... But, burning them isn't good... *Sob*Sob*."

"....These monks, they dare say Inuchiyo's tiger hat is unclean... Unforgivable!"

"These monks seem to be quite stubborn~ Kichi-nee-san too is known for her stubbornness~ How troubling~"

"There's a saying between merchants, ‘For profits, it's okay even if the conditions are disadvantageous’. Right now, peace is our most important objective. The last condition is too forceful."

"Both in Europe and Japan, why does the religious world treat women to be unclean? Maybe it's because women possess breasts? The expression of Gousei when he is looking at my breasts seems to say ‘The servant of demons’, full of fear and hatred; it makes me so scared... *Shiver*Shiver*"

"They know nothing about us yet treat women as unclean. These bastard monks don't even have the respect to let us kill them. Since this is so troublesome, allow me to poison them all."

"T...Th...Though I don't really understand the situation , what is everyone doing now? Uhh...Uhhhhhhh....."

The opinions are totally divided.

And to the wary Gousei, Hisahide's special skill of seduction was useless as well.

Yoshiharu, who was knowledgeable about the sengoku games was also troubled by the rule of prohibiting women.

If there were no cute girls or big-breasted girls in the world, even the perverted Yoshiharu might not survive a day, so he could not comprehend the ancient views that women were unclean at all.

Nobuna, whose perfectionist mindset had surpassed others by 300 years could not suppress her feelings of

wanting to both disarm Mount Hiei and, at the same time, remove the rule that prohibited women on the mountain.

"If...If that's the case, we won't get anywhere if Gousei dislikes women. So, why don't the bishoujos of the Oda clan serve them to let them change their impression on us ?"

Katsuie actually voiced her ridiculous idea, and Yoshiharu was instantly excited, replying "Good idea, everyone can cosplay as bunny girls, mikos and maids to serve those monks! I can have some good eye candy too!"

Nobuna rejected loudly, "Huh? Miko? Maido!? Won't that be conquering the world using seduction!? If we really do it, the images of self-respecting female warriors everywhere will… "

"Uwahhh.... I'm so sorry, so sorry Hime-sama! I...I...I... didn't mean to suggest things like conquering the world using seduction!"

With teary eyes, Katsuie seems about to burst into tears as Yoshiharu continued saying.

"....This isn't good. Nobuna, don't worry about the rule ! They will remove it by themselves around the Meiji era, so...!"

"Meiji? When will that be!?"

"Umm, around 300 years from now."

"Huh? Are you an idiot!? Do I look like I can I wait for 300 years? I want to destroy this stupid rule now!"

"Uwahhh, aren't you greedy!?"

Gousei, who had been silently sitting to the side, stood up.

Most likely he was afraid that the female warriors present would turn him into a hostage.

"Uwahahaha! It's about time for me to go. If you want to force us to remove our rule of prohibiting women, we might as well get burnt to ashes! Come at us then!"

At this time.

Someone unexpected... The sister Frois tugged at Gousei's sleeves with all her efforts and refused to let go.

"Please wait! Please talk again with Nobuna-sama! If this goes on, Mount Hiei will...."

"Ohhhh!? A priestess from the evil sects of namban? But, these shockingly big breasts... Ahhhh, don't touch me, DON'T TOUCH ME! My power... My power will be sucked away!"

Gousei kept shouting, "Ohhhh, let me go, let me go!" and seemed to dislike Frois a great deal. Sweat started flowing down his face; Frois' call for reason seemed to have the exact opposite effect.

Just when Nobuna was preparing to give up...

"Oh hohohohoho! Nobuna-sama, you seem troubled. For a time like this, please ask for this Seii Taishogun!"

The Seii Taishogun everyone had completely forgotten even existed, Imagawa Yoshimoto elegantly appeared wearing sandals commonly worn by mikos.

Nobuna stared at Yoshimoto, her face immediately clouding with impatience.

"Huh? When did you change back to "warara"[3]? You are now my puppet, yet you still put on such airs!"

"Arararararara, since I've become the Seii Taishogun, using warara again is obvious! Actually, I should refer myself as "chin"[4], but since I don't want to give Himiko-sama trouble, I will have to endure with just " warara"!"

"You are really messed up in your usage of keigo!"

"Yes, that's it! At such a time, we can only rely on Himiko-sama's decree!" Yoshiharu slapped his own leg.

"At such a time, even if all we have is this Imagawa Yoshimoto, it's better than nothing!" Mitsuhide agreed as well.

Niwa Nagahide smiled and said, "As a missionary candidate, this is brilliant. 80 points."

"There's no helping it... though I'm not expecting much of it." Nobuna said.

"You guys can just wait here! I will use my godly negotiation skills to get the decree! Ohohohoho!"

Imagawa Yoshimoto believed firmly that she could complete the historic task of getting the royal decree herself.

Part 5

Imperial Palace.

"What!? That Suruga's puppet shogun came to see Himiko without an appointment!?"

Early in the morning, Kampaku Konoe Sakihisa rushed over to the palace as soon as he received the report, his eyes rolling in surprise.

Most surprising however was that Konoe Sakihisa was the one who planned the whole scenario of forcing the Oda clan into a corner.

Sakihisa was the one behind Asai Hisamasa suddenly breaking off the alliance with the Oda clan, having sent him a secret letter saying, "Oda Nobuna wants to destroy

this world of statuses and had threatened that she will destroy the palace and Himiko." This exact letter was actually the start of the whole conspiracy.

Using the same method, persuading Mount Hiei using its relations with the palace went easily.

As for the Rokoku and Miyoshi clans, they had both received a letter simply stating, "The Oda army is currently trapped in Mount Hiei, now is the time to act!"

But, he never would have expected that Sugitani Zenjuubou could have failed his assassination attempt.

If that useless fellow had only succeeded, the Oda clan would be totally destroyed by now! Now he has even disappeared in shame, Sakihisa felt a fool for trusting the ninja!

"No, definitely not. I don't know why Himiko-sama trusts that Oda Nobuna so much, but I must never let that Suruga puppet shogun and Himiko-sama meet....!"

Sakihisa rushed to the palace in a hurry, but it was too late.

"Ohhohohoho! If that's the case, please write the royal decree soon! As expected of Himiko-sama!"

This high-pitched laughter that seems to pierce the brain... was definitely not Himiko-sama's.

"Then, please take this royal decree over to my brother at Mount Hiei."

"Ahhh, even Himiko-sama agrees... I, Seii Taishogun Imagawa Yoshimoto am so honored!"

"I've heard that Nobuna is hurt; how is she now?"

"That fellow is already energetic again! Though she seems kinda confused after drinking so much medicine and even had the idea of 'burning Mount Hiei', ever since that monkey she keeps returned to her from Kanegasaki, she is back to herself!"

"I see, Sagara Yoshiharu is safe too."

"Yes yes. He is safe, I'm only telling you, Himiko-sama. That Saru is the only 'real Japanese man' that I, the Seii Taishogun acknowledge, how can he die so simply!? Ahahahahahaha!"

Konoe Sakihisa ran into the room, panting profusely.

十四万

The Imagawa Yoshimoto that he had once thought was just an elegant puppet now wore a dragon shaped accessory on her head as she fanned herself with a golden fan.

Even if she is the Taishogun, to dress like that in front of Himiko, this is just too disrespectful!

"Wa....Wait!"

"Ara ara, isn't this Kampaku-sama? Hmmm, white eyebrows with black teeth, what a noble look, or were you born like this? Oh hohoho."

Sakihisa grinds his teeth with fury. This stupid Suruga woman believed that being Taishogun made her greater than Kampaku; no, maybe she even thought the shogun on par with Himiko-sama, so no matter what I say, she will definitely, "Ahahahaha" and not listen to any of it.

This was the most difficult missionary, that bastard Oda Nobuna!

With this, Sakihisa could only persuade Himiko-sama to retract her order.

"Himiko-sama, if we force a peace between the Asai Asakura clans and the Oda clan, it will mean demolishing the rule of prohibiting women at Mount Hiei! The reputation of Mount Hiei, the holy mountain in charge of protecting Kyoto's gate of demons, will completely disintegrate!"

"What are you saying?" muttered the young Himiko-sama behind the veil

"Mount Hiei and Mount Koya's rule prohibiting women was established nearly 800 years ago during the Heijou-kyo era. It's a tradition that has 800 years of history. If we destroy such a tradition, it means we are destroying the authority of Yamato Gose and Himiko-sama."

"The spiritual mountain's prohibition to women came from Heijou-kyo's Yoro code, and it was never intended to discriminate against females but to let the monks observe their tonsure..." Sakihisa continued.

"In the Yoro code, men were prohibited as well as women, but now women are prohibited exclusively. Isn't that very strange?"

"Ahh, Ahh, that..." Sakihisa stumbled and started shivering...

800 years ago when the yoro code was established, the Buddhism community in Japan had both monasteries and nunneries. They all observed a strict rule: "Monks and nuns are to swear an oath of chastity." And so Yamato Gose who ruled Japan established the rule for females to not enter monasteries, and males to not enter nunneries.

Eventually, this country's nunneries slowly disappeared due to the changing of eras, and the rule on prohibiting men was also forgotten by everyone.

But the rule of prohibiting women was ingrained with the beliefs of the spiritual mountain before Buddhism came, and the reason for establishing the rule was forgotten and slowly became simply another tradition.

"D..Do...Don't tell me, the young Himiko-sama even knows such an ancient story...?"

Sakihisa still wouldn’t admit defeat and pressed on, retaliating "But the point about women being unclean has long been acknowledged."

Himiko simply smiled and retorted "I see, if being a woman makes them unable to enter Mount Hiei... Then I too am unclean and can't enter Mount Hiei?"

"Huh? Nn...no...No such thing! Those fellows who dare say the esteemed Himiko-sama is unclean will definitely receive divine punishment!"

"If that's the case, the rule of prohibiting women is just an outdated thing, right?"

"....L...Like you said~!"

Sakihisa broke out in sweat and stood there trembling.

"It's about time for the era of prohibiting women from entering spiritual mountains to end. Women were not born with sins, don’t you agree?"

"What wisdom, I can't retaliate at all!"

Sakihisa finally gave up resisting.

"Ohhohohoho! You have nothing more to say, Kampaku-sama? Then let me, Ima~Gawa~Yoshi~moto go to Mount Hiei's main hall in place of Himiko-sama for the peace negotiation!"

Interrupting Imagawa Yoshimoto's high-pitched laughter, Himiko said "I hope you can pass a message to Nobuna-sama: There isn't just one dream. I hope you can cherish Sagara Yoshiharu."

"Ehh, Ehh, I don't really understand the meaning of this, but I understand the task."

In the midst of this success.

"Oda Nobuna, you once again sneaked through the crisis... Just you wait, I will gather stronger enemies to deal with you." Konoe Sakihisa had already started on a new plan. The evil expression on his face was not discovered by Himiko due to the veil. Maybe, the officials erected the veil precisely for this purpose.

Part 6

December 13th.

The season was still winter.

Along a mountain path covered with snow, energetic female warriors appeared, intent on destroying Mount Hiei’s 800 year-old rule prohibiting females.

"What a breathtaking view! Though it's kinda cold, this scene makes climbing the mountain worth it!"

"The view of Kyoto from Mount Hiei, 95 points."

"Ohahahahaha! Are you satisfied, Nobuna-sama? Are you not going to reward me, who delivered the royal decree from Himiko? How about using gold for my Nijou castle?"

"Yoshimoto-sama, Yoshimoto-sama, the battle with the Asai Asakura allied forces has not ended; your request is too unreasonable~"

"Arara, Motoyasu, if that's the case, I will have to settle with silver then."

"I thought it would turn into something bad..."

- Sob*Sob*

With Oda Nobuna leading, the excited retainers formed the group.

In the almost total female group, Sagara Yoshiharu was the only male in sight.

"There! There are relatives of Saru right there! Your mates!"

"Shut up, those are Japanese monkeys."

Loud and boisterous as they walked, they finally reached the main hall.

The Asai Asakura soldiers that surrounded the main hall to protect their masters were shocked at the sight.

"Th...That is the princess of the Oda clan... Su...Such unparalleled beauty."

"Shibata Katsuie, and Niwa Nagahide, and Akechi Mitsuhide, every one of them are rare beauties."

"Only that Saru is unforgivable! To be surrounded by beauties, arghhhh!"

"UNFORGIVABLE!"

"Sagara Yoshiharu! We must kill you on the battlefield! "

They could easily hear the whispers of the soldiers.

The monks that were disarmed by the decree were equally amazed.

"W...What pretty female warriors!"

"Young, pretty and refined... Ahh, I can't seem to ignore these material beings."

"No, maybe the material world is the real paradise."

"....I, have decided to quit being a monk."

"But there's a Saru mixed in, unforgivable."

"Die! Hurry and die! Sagara Yoshiharu!"

Admiring the pretty Oda clan warriors, but Yoshiharu felt them emitting obvious killing intent.

"Why am I the only one hated... Just why is that?"

"Hmph, let us go in, Saru."

Asai Hisamasa and Asakura Yoshikage had already pressed their seals on the agreement. Nobuna was the only one left.

But,

At the gates of the main hall stood 2 people.

Wakasa's shota omyouji Tsuchimikado and " Uwahahaha, come at me!" Shougakuin Gousei waving his metal rod as he laughed.

"What, you two, we are here for the peace agreement. Don't tell me you plan to ignore Himiko's decree and start the war again?"

"How can that be~ Asai-dono and Asakura-dono have already sealed their approval as per Himiko-dono's decree. I am just here to hand you Tsuchimikado as per the conditions. But... I don't mind handing him to you, but what do I do after handing him over? I promised you nothing! Wahahahaha!"

"Exactly, I did not say anything about surrendering... but I plan to defeat you guys here." Tsuchimikado said arrogantly.

"I'm leaving this to you, Tsuchimikado-dono, don't worry and give these unclean women a bloodbath... Please!"

"What a bastard monk! Too despicable! And they were saying they aren't defying the decree!" Nobuna and the rest were enraged at the deception.

"Ahh, Mount Hiei is as remarkable as ever... This inexhaustible ‘Ki’ that was gathered from Kyoto. After absorbing it, I'm 10 times stronger than when I was at Wakasa, no, 20 times stronger! Where is Takenaka Hanbei?"

"Here." Hanbei raised her hand timidly as her small horse climbed forward up the mountain.

"You are that rising dragon of Mount Bodai, being known as ‘The modern Koumei’? You are just a rural omyouji! Come and duel it out with the direct descendant of Abe Seimei-sama, the head of Tsuchimikado!"

Yoshiharu and the rest shouted, "Despicable bastard~!" and were making a scene, and Nobuna also let fly, " What's with this kid?"

"The low level shikigamis this fellow controls are afraid of the gunshots of arquebus, but no matter what

we can't let Hanbei meet with any danger." Yoshiharu whispered to Nobuna, as she did not bring her arquebus to sign the peace agreement.

Hanbei slowly got down from the horse and with a clear voice declared, "I understand, let's have a duel then. "

"Huh, it's too dangerous, Hanbei-chan! That fellow can control huge amounts of shikigamis, and he should be much more dangerous now compared to when he was at Wakasa."

"Yoshiharu-sama, it's okay now. Due to you, my body has recuperated. Now is the time to make up for being unable to help after my collapse at Kiyomizu temple."

Hanbei lowered her head with a difficult expression.

"But, Hanbei-chan."

"Hoo, there's really nothing to worry about."

"Then, rising dragon-kun, we can start the duel now? Shikigami army, summon!" Tsuchimikado shouted

confidently, and in an instant countless scary shikigamis appeared in the sky and rushed towards Hanbei, Nobuna and the rest.

"There they are, there they are! The demons have appeared! Noooooo!" Katsuie started swinging her spear, intent on mowing down the spirits like she fought men, yet she could not reach the flying shikigamis.

If this went on, Nobuna and the rest would all die at this peace agreement ceremony.

But at this moment,

Takenaka Hanbei calmly drew out a talisman and threw it up into the air.

"Zenki-sama, I'll leave this to you."

"Ahh, leave this to me."

The gentleman with a fox face, Zenki appeared in front of Tsuchimikado.

"What, this shikigami again? Though you did deceive me at Mizusaka Ridge."

"Hoo, how can Sagara Yoshiharu be defeated by a guy like you? Such a foolish fellow to be so easily deceived."

"No matter what, this is just too reckless. Even if you are a high level shikigami, alone you can never match my shikigami army. You yourself should understand. Since each of these individual shikigamis' strengths are now 20 times greater, then it's a simple numbers game. Just one of you is so boring, I can't even win with pride."

Targeting Zenki, all the shikigamis rushed forward in an instant.

Suddenly, Zenki laughed out loud.

"You didn't notice? Since my master's health is good, and we are at Mount Hiei, my strength is 1000 times more than the time at Wakasa."

"Stop boasting, it's impossible for any omyouji other than Abe Seimei-sama to be stronger than me. How can a stupid thing summoned by a rural omyouji be my opponent?"

"Ehhh, even the Tsuchimikado clan's descendant is outdated. All of them are useless descendants."

Facing the shikigami army coming from all directions.

Zenki spoke softly.

"Pathetic spirits that have even forgotten who you were in life, go back to the darkness."

“Rin~Byou~Tou~Sha~Kai~Jin~Retsu~Zai~Zen!”

“Come, thousands arms Guanyin.”

Pointing to the heavens, chanting spells, countless punches visible only to the omyoujis and shikigamis fall from the sky,

- Bham*
- Boom*
- Kachak*

Not a single one was left, the whole shikigami army was destroyed in a blink of an eye.

The battle of the strongest omyouji, was over in an instant.

"....What...? Such a thing... Im...Impossible...!?"

Tsuchimikado fell on his feet, stunned.(!)

"How is this possible!? The direct descendant of Abe Seimei-sama, the head of Tsuchimikado, Japan's strongest omyouji, how... how can I lose so easily..."

"Hoo, the Abe clan that absorbed the power of a fox had declined over the course of a few hundred years. Tsuchimikado, the era of omyoujis has fallen to the dark ages of Japan. My master and I will personally end this omyouji era.

With a glance Zenki saw Tsuchimikado’s face suddenly transform.

His confident, tenacious look after being defeated suddenly vanished.

Instead, Tsuchimikado’s face was now filled with fear.

This is impossible.

Such a thing... is definitely impossible!

There's no reason to ask why...

The rumors that were passed down through the ages of the Tsuchimikado clan, that no matter how great one's talent is, the strongest shikigami that could never be summoned, his real form is...

"...Don't tell me... Don't tell me... You... are... Founder... -sama!?"

"So troubling..." Zenki laughed like a fox.

"Tsuchimikado, you still have a long way ahead. To proclaim yourself as the descendant of Abe Seimei, you are still 10 years too early. Go back to Wakasa and train from the start again."

"Uwahh...Uwahhhhhhhhh! I'm so sorry!!!"

Tsuchimikado cried and tumbled down the mountain, so afraid that he was reduced to childlike blubbering.

As he ran, Zenki created invisible hands to knock at Tsuchimikado's head, making his nose bleed as he kept tumbling down the mountain and soon vanished from Nobuna and the rest's sight.

"....Ara ara, I was planning to take your life, thank my master's kindness."

"Thank you so much, Zenki-sama! With this, Tsuchimikado won't dare to attack Yoshiharu-sama anymore."

"Hmmm, Hanbei-dono, you are really a good child."

Nobuna and the rest were stunned where they stood, asking "What happened? Did Zenki do something? I see nothing at all.", as Zenki vanished into a puff of smoke.

"This... Impossible! Why did Tsuchimikado lose to this hamster-like lass!?"

Gousei, having failed in his last bit of defiance, was slowly surrounded by Nobuna and the rest.

"Uwahhhh! Is the main hall fated to never escape the taint of these unclean women!? Despair! Guanyin, please

punish these unclean women right now! I beg you, I'm begging you, if you hear my wish, please save this monk from the evil claws of these women!"

Gousei, feeling that his life was in danger, dropped his metal rod on the group and started shouting as his big body shook uncontrollably.

Gousei showed his true cowardly nature, becoming a fish on the chopping board for Nobuna and her female warriors.

The fury in the eyes of Nobuna and the rest was burning fiercer and fiercer .

Especially angry was the one Gousei attacked dueled, only to retreat to Mount Hiei every time she was winning . Katsuie was even starting to grind her teeth in anger.

Enveloped by the killing intent of these female warriors, Gousei coughed and quickly whimpered "* Cough*. If that's the case, I'm going off now."

Just as he stood up and prepared to make a despicable retreat,

- Pak!!*

"Uwahhhh!?"

Nobuna's flying kick hit home on Gousei's abdomen... The ends of her feet digging itself nearly into his liver.

"Who are the women deserving punishment!? Where are we unclean? Say it out, you bastard monk!"

"Exactly! The unclean one here is you, planning to assassinate us during the peace agreement ceremony! You still think of yourself as Mount Hiei's monk after defying Himiko-sama's decree!? Do you know the word ‘ shame’!?"

- Bham!*

The shining forehead of the furious Juubei Mitsuhide sent a kick right at Gousei's crotch without any mercy.

"Ohhhhhhh!?"

Gousei could not withstand the fertility-destroying impact and writhed on the ground in pain.

"Sp...Spare me! I know my mistake! Strong women aren't unclean, I won't say that again! Please spare my life!"

"Do you think we will let you run away!?"

"Everyone, how about we treat this fellow as a sandbag, beat him up till he stops twitching!"

"Ohohohoho! Compared to shooting arrows, I'm much better in soccer!"

"This might not be an appropriate action for a conqueror of the world, but my mood now is full points!"

"Understood, Hime-sama! Eat this, Shibata special, Face Stomp!"

UWAHHHHHH!

Using all her strength, Katsuie mercilessly rained stomp after stomp on the prone Gousei.

"Ehhh, so they are this violent!? Sa...Save me, Yoshiharu-sama!"

Nobuna's initial kick was already fatal, and Juubei's kick to every man’s weak point without hesitation was enough to make any spectator cringe.... But, compared to them, Katsuie's stomping was... No matter what, it's too

much, right? Looking at Gousei's pathetic state, Yoshiharu can't help but shiver with fear too.

The monks and soldiers of Asai Asakura clans were saying, "Even that Gousei can't fight back, huh...." "Now, Gousei-sama seems unexpectedly unworthy of pity." " Somehow, it seems oddly satisfying." "He lost everytime he dueled with Shibata Katsuie." "To think that women are weak, what a big mistake..." "It's better if we leave the women alone." as they stood there, shivering and watching Gousei’s abuse.

"Hanbei-chan, Hanbei-chan, please go and stop them."

"But...It's scary... *Sob*Sob*"

"Hoo, the esteemed monk Ikyu-sama once said, ‘ Women are the treasure of Buddhism, because Sakyamuni and Siddhattha were both born from women’ , so guys who use illogical reasoning like prohibiting women from entering someplace will never win against us."

Matsunaga Hisahide held no intention of stopping them either.

Yoshiharu himself did not have the courage to stop Nobuna and the rest who had been amassing their fury ever since the Retreat at Kanegasaki.

But, someone courageously stepped forward.

"No...Nobuna-sama! Violence isn't good! If you continue on, Gousei-sama is just too pitiful."

This courageous girl used her own body and shielded the battered Gousei, trying her best to stop Nobuna and her gang's violence.

And this girl was...

"....Frois? This fellow is the monk who had always been harming you missionaries. He is your enemy, isn't he? Why are you stopping us?"

Christian missionary Frois.

"Nobuna-sama, Jesus-sama once taught us to 'love your enemy'. Gousei-sama has already admitted his mistake to you, and has thoroughly repented... Though it's a fact that we missionaries did indeed have lots of trouble, I'm afraid that Gousei-sama suffered through

cruel training and held severe misunderstandings about women. So I beg you, please be merciful."

"Well, since you said so... What about you guys?"

"If that's the case, Mitsuhide too will forgive him."

"Thanks."

Frois helped Gousei up and revealed a light smile.

Gousei, finally able to straighten his back with support from Frois's shoulder....

"Bu....Buddha-sama....!

"Uwahh!", he sobbed, hugging Frois's legs.

"You don't give up even on a useless guy like me, you are the real Guanyin-sama! Thank you so much! Thank you so much...! Who could predict the Guanyin-sama who helps all mortals will descent on this world as a namban girl!?"

"....Eh? Ummm...?"

"I heard Guanyin-sama had 33 forms, maybe this namban missionary form is your 34th form!? Ohh, ohh, what glittering blonde hair... That sparkling blue eyes... What an appropriate appearance for Guanyin-sama! And , those big breasts that are full of motherly instinct! The mother I have never met must definitely be like you!"

"....Eh? Ehhh?"

"From now on, Shougakuin Gousei will forever serve you, and become Musashibo that protects Frois-sama! Yes... As long as I have one breath left...! Ahh, Guanyin-samaaaaa!"

Gousei screams as he continued to rub his face fiercely on Frois's legs.

The monks who were utterly disappointed by his ridiculous actions all droop their heads and slowly disperse...

"Wait, plea... please stop! I...I'm a sister already married to God... Who... Who can come save me!?"

"What the hell are you doing, you lecher monk! Get the hell away from Frois!"

"He is becoming more and more disgusting! We should just kill him off!"

"Ara ara, though a troublesome enemy has become our ally... , I'm afraid it will become even more troublesome... A situation of 50 points."

"I can continue hitting him then? Ok! Eat this!"

Part 7

Finally,

Nobuna took the last step towards the peace agreement.

They had finally reversed their desperate situation.

They did not see the cowardly Asai Hisamasa during the peace agreement ceremony; he must have ran away before Nobuna had even stepped into the main hall.

And the other person, Asakura Yoshikage.

After walking out from the main hall, he finally saw Oda Nobuna herself for the first time.

Asakura Yoshikage was a young warrior with both fine looks and build, but his face always drooped and his eyes seem to swim around unfocused. The most abnormal thing though was right behind Yoshikage now; a piece of wall within the main hall was covered with pretty girls from the tales of Genji. Surrounded by all the drawings stood the well-dressed Nobuna, idling around.

"....This!? Asakura Yoshikage, was this drawn by you!? Is this really okay, to draw such things at such a holy place?"

"A life of guarding a castle is just too boring, so I called Hasegawa Tohaku over from Echizen to draw this. Ho, ho, ho, but you are even prettier than the drawings, the exact princess I dreamt of. Finally, I have found a beautiful and flawless girl like my mother... You're too beautiful, so beautiful that I want to pull all your organs out and put them as specimens on my side!"

Asakura Yoshikage had done research on Oda Nobuna while he waited upon Mount Hiei, and he seemed to have become infatuated with Nobuna.

"......!?"

Nobuna shivered silently.

What?

What's going on with this guy?

Like his mother? ....Specimen...?

What is he talking about?

"Finally, I have found the girl I wanted in the real world. I must use all means to bring you back to Ichijodani. Then, I will dress you in different elegant attires... and cultivate you to become my Murasaki. Feel honored, this is our combined destiny!"

"Don't come over!"

Asakura Yoshikage's eyes began to glitter with a crazy look as his hands raised like he wanted to catch Nobuna, but the shivering Nobuna reflexively hid behind Yoshiharu.

This was the first time for Nobuna, who had not truly known what fear was like, to fear a person to this extent.

And the face Asakura Yoshikage made as he leered at Nobuna was definitely not normal.

They were not the eyes of a guy in love with a girl, but more like eyes that wanted to control; eyes with sinister ideas. Those eyes were full of a threatening darkness.

"Saru, this guy is making me so uncomfortable! Why did he draw me like that even when we have never meet before? And saying he wants to make me into a specimen , though I don't know what is going on, I'm so scared... so scared..."

"Calm down Nobuna, there are such guys no matter the era; there is no need to be scared."

Yoshiharu fiercely held Asakura Yoshikage's gaze as he held Nobuna close, giving her strength.

"You must be Saru! Boring, so boring! There are things like that happening frequently in the real world. I thought I had found the perfect bishoujo, but there are always worms like you who are just quick... While I was thinking about girls frivolously, monkeys like you were destroying the maidens, unforgivable!" Asakura Yoshikage shouted, his voice filled with hatred.

"Sagara Yoshiharu, I hereby swear to kill you on the battleground without fail! A miracle of art like Oda

Nobuna will never be tainted by a worm like you! No matter what price I pay, I must definitely bring her and imprison her back in my residence and help her change her clothes. To cultivate her into a Murasaki that belongs only to me, only Oda Nobuna can be the girl who is my mother!"

"Saru, hug me tightly... I'm so scared...." Nobuna hugged Yoshiharu even tighter in fear, and the scene only served to fan Asakura Yoshikage's rage.

"Let's meet again on the battlefield, Oda Nobuna. It's regrettable, but this is not the Heian era. Though I do not want to enter dirty battles... Just you wait. To be able to imprison you back at Ichijodani and cherish you fully, I will definitely destroy the Oda army, kill this shameless Saru and claim your love."

Crazy, this guy was crazy.

It was not just unreasonable; he seemed to be raping her with his eyes, his gaze enough to make any person shiver with fright.

Too disgusting.

"....Saru... Too scary... To be caught by such a guy and imprisoned... I would rather die..."

"Don't be afraid, if we battle with Asakura Yoshikage, you will definitely win!" Yoshiharu assured, hugging Nobuna tightly.

A tear stricken Nobuna raised her head as she faced Yoshiharu.

"Really? Is this your future knowledge? Didn't we have an agreement? Do you not want your head anymore?"

"No, it's not my future knowledge. That maniac who is engrossed with his own world will never be the Oda clan's opponent. We could never lose to such a maniac, get it!?"

"Yes, it's like that." Nobuna finally smiled.

But Yoshiharu kept his guard up, thinking *Though Asakura Yoshikage is a pervert, he may unexpectedly be a strong enemy.*

Postponing the battle with Asakura and Yoshikage, Nobuna had finally gone through her biggest crisis.

The Miyoshi and Rokoku clans knew that they couldn’t stand up against the Oda clan and once again backed down.

After that though, Takenaka Hanbei did trip and fall onto the "Holy Flame" when she ran into the main hall, causing the whole hall to go up in flames. Zenki who was summoned again summoned a big rain and the Holy Flame that had not been extinguished for 800 years was put out completely. But Gousei, having already enslaved himself to Frois did not mind it at all. Only the monks of Mount Hiei were crying in anguish.

With this, Nobuna herself could finally return to Kyoto .

The wound on her abdomen was no longer hurting that much.

"It's...It's about time to give Saru his reward....."

"Hmmm? Why is your face red?" Yoshiharu asked her.

Nobuna started stuttering, "Hu...Hurry and go back to Nene's side. That child, has been cleansing herself to pray for your safety."

"Ohh, that's true; I should go back soon!" Yoshiharu answered.

"I've been with the army this whole time since I came back from Kanegasaki! If I don't return to calm Nene down, things will be bad."

Wait, Saru! it's true that many things have happened, but don't tell me you've forgotten about the promise of a kiss with me?

Thinking this, Nobuna suddenly became unhappy.

After Yoshiharu shouted, "Wait for me, Nene!" and ran off, Niwa Nagahide walked to Nobuna's side with a smile.

"....Hmm, the night when we go back to Kyoto, ask Yoshiharu-dono to your room, and then give him his reward properly."

"Is that really ok? Aren't you guys against me being together with Saru?"

"No, Nagahide will not make such a dumb mistake a second time. From now on, I will fully support the love between Hime and Yoshiharu-dono."

"Support.... Manchiyo, are you misunderstanding something? I...I...I... am just giving Sa...Sa...Saru a reward as his Ma...Ma...Ma...Ma...Master... T...Th...Th...This is just purely a duty... A duty...!"

Nagahide grasped Nobuna's hands as she began to panic and babble things like usual, revealing a smile that accepted everything.

"....Hime, there is no need to worry so much anymore. Just be the conqueror of the world like this. This path is a hard path, so, even if Hime is a little willful, you must grab your own happiness. I will support you silently from behind until Hime has fulfilled all her wishes."

Nobuna said, "Well... Since you said so....", and still wasn't honest.

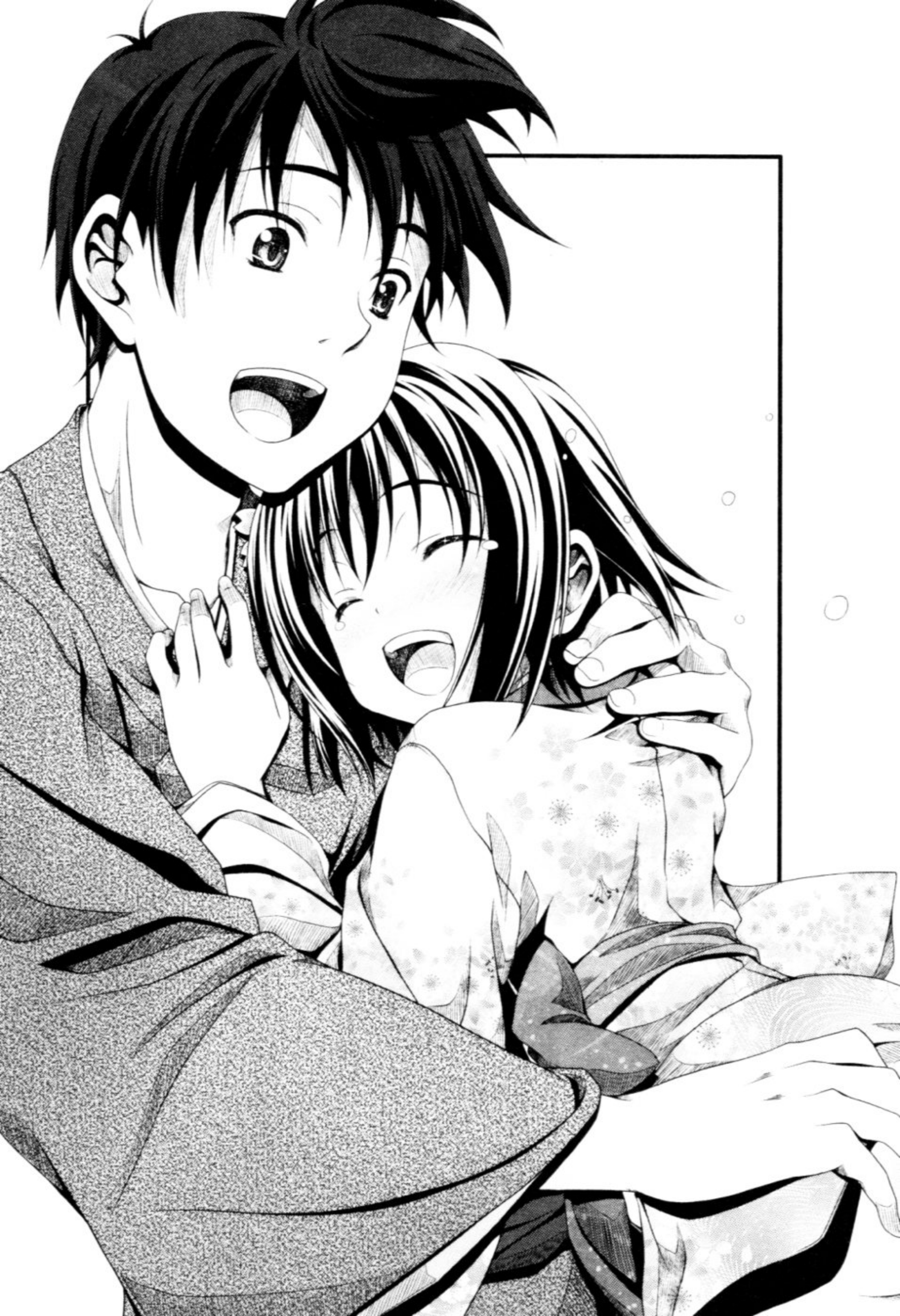
If she continued to look at Nagahide's gentle smile, she might really cry out.

But, now isn't the time to act tough... Though I'm sorry for Manchiyo... once we return to Kyoto, I must give Saru his reward, using my first kiss.

Though it was only a little, Nobuna was finally able to be honest

Part 8

"Onii-sama! Onii-sama! Onii-sama!



Kyoto, Myoukaku Temple

Back at the temple where Yoshiharu had temporarily stayed, Yoshiharu revealed a troubled smile as Nene hugged him tightly.

So noisy and irritating. Wetting her bed during the night, coming over to disturb me when I am flirting with girls, and being better than her brother in maths; honestly, such a dislikeable sister...

But, as expected...

This brat Nene is just too cute!

Those big eyes swollen from crying and that small nose still trembling with snot... Ahhh, damn!

Damn it, even I can't hold back the tears, these happy tears.

I, who was trapped in the sengoku era finally had a family.

Ahhhh! It's so good to be alive! It's so good to not die on the battlefield!

Yoshiharu, who almost died at the "Retreat of Kanegasaki", was finally able to experience the warmth of his family from Nene, who had been waiting for him all this while.

Yoshiharu had never had an actual sister before, yet he was shouting, "So cute, so cute." and did not exactly know what to do.

"Uhhh, what should I do at such a time, I have totally no idea!"

First, I should try touching her hair...

Ohhh! She looks a little annoyed, yet full of happiness. She's just so cute.

"Hey, what's going on Onii-sama, you are kinda different from normal."

"Ahhh, don't mind me, don't mind me, it's just purely an expression of love between family members."

"But when you were at Kanegasaki, didn't Onii-sama just think only of Hime-sama? Hadn't you forgotten all about Nene?"

"Nono, when I was almost dead, all I could think of was Nene. Nene is the very reason I could come back alive!"

"....Ehh!? Did you eat something bad, Onii-sama!?"

"It's so good that Nene's here.... It's so good that Nene's here.... I kinda feel like I forgot something very important , but no matter what, I will celebrate tonight together with Nene." Yoshiharu thought.

"Ahh, Onii-sama, did you buy any Echizen souvenirs for me?"

Nene began to chant "Souvenir! Souvenir!" as she wiggled in Yoshiharu's lap, getting noisier and noisier.

Ahh... To have a family waiting for you when you come back is just so good... I should thank Nobuna for giving me Nene as my sister.

"I did not have time for souvenirs at Echizen, but I did buy lots of souvenirs and dried tofu strips from Mount Hiei! Come and test them!"

"Ohh! What are tofu strips, Onii-sama?"

"It's a specialty that monks eat. It's made of hardened tofu."

"Ohhh, specialty... It's different from tofu?"

"It's different from tofu. It's more flexible, kinda like noodles."

"I understand! Hurry and throw tofu and these tofu strips into Hatcho Miso soup!"

Nene hastily started a fire under a pot and took out a bottle of Miso.

Yoshiharu stopped her frantically.

"No miso allowed. If you put them in, won't it be Nagoya flavored?"

"Hmmm? If I don't put miso in, it will become tasteless , can that be eaten?"

"Please, Nene. Try to cook something other than Nagoya flavored.

"NO! There must be miso~! If you say something bad about miso again, I will cry right now!"

"Damn it... Damn it~! Sisters are just so troublesome!"

Nene playfully ran away holding the bottle as Yoshiharu shouted, "At least, not the tofu strips." and chased her, the both of them playing happily in the room !

"Gotcha!"

"Ahhhh! Onii-sama, lemme go!"

"No can do! That miso isn't allowed! *tickle*tickle* Eat this!"

"Ahahahahaha! If that's the case, I will use these 'Kick of Surekill to Man' from Akechi!"

Uhhhh.

"Uwahhhh!? ... Don't suddenly kick at my weak point!"

"Ohhh? Onii-sama really collapsed? What should I do? "

"That's why, don't become a girl like Juubei-chan. Uhhhhh, it hurts, Sa...Save me!"

"Ahh, Onii-sama? Get a hold of yourself, don't die!"

- Thump*Thump*
- Thump*Thump*

Nene sat on the tummy of Yoshiharu who was rolling around the tatami due to the pain.

"Is it here, does it hurt here? Let Nene help you stop the pain!"

"Stop, hurry and stop. It will become much worse, in many ways really, so don't touch there! Don't press on it, ouch!"

"If that's the case, how about this!?"

"Don't rub! Don't take off my pants! We will be misunderstood!"

"If I don't take them off, how do I know the condition of the wound!?"

"No! Damn it, it's the worst if sisters are your opponent!"

But, no matter what Nene did tonight, Yoshiharu could smile back at her.

"Yoshiharu-sama... Umm... I brought the report from Goemon-sama, but, what bad things have you been doing here?"

"....It's just Me and Nene playing too much... *Shy*"

Goemon, currently at work on Takenaka island trying to save the imprisoned Asai Nagamasa and Tsuda Nobusumi, had sent back a report. Holding that report, Hanbei and Inuchiyo came to visit Yoshiharu.

But somehow, Yoshiharu was very happily "playing" with Nene, who always had quite a "weird" relationship with him.

Anyway, why is Nene rubbing Yoshiharu's crotch!?

"Yoshiharu-sama!? Don't tell me... Your perversion has finally raised your hands onto the still young Nene!?"

"....Different from Gousei, a real women's enemy. Let this justice, Inu-sama give divine punishment!"

"Eh? Wrong, it's a misunderstanding! Nothing happened, I did nothing!"

Inuchiyo and Hanbei push away Nene who had been riding on Yoshiharu's body.

"What are you guys doing!? Nene is just playing with Onii-sama!"

"Don't be fooled, Nene-sama! Yoshiharu too, if you lust after girls' bodies so much... Then... I... I... Um... I'm much older than Nene-sama, but our body size is very similar...."

"Hanbei-chan, I said it's a misunderstanding! Why did you start to strip!?"

"....Gosh... If we don't drag Yoshiharu back to the real world, he will become a useless person forever liking small girls... Inuchiyo will help too."

"Why did you suddenly hug me, Inuchiyo? Anyway, aren't you a loli too!? From my point of view, both you and Nene are of the same type!"

"....*Piak* Inuchiyo... isn't a small girl... In terms of age. ... Is a shoujo"

"It seems that there was a scary illness in Yoshiharu-sama's country that is called 'Lolicon', an illness that makes the person only love small girls. I think Yoshiharu-sama definitely had an attack from 'lolicon'! Th...Tho...Though I'm so embarrassed, before it's too late, we will treat you!"

"I beg you, Hanbei-chan, calm down and listen to me! I'm not having an attack from 'lolicon'. But if Hanbei-chan and Inuchiyo-chan keep exciting me like this, I might really become a lolicon!"

"Ohhh... Is it a 'game' to strip naked with Onii-sama? It seems interesting, Nene wants in too!"

"Noooo! Nene-sama!"

"....Yoshiharu is really bad, to train Nene to such an extent....."

"Don't say such strange words, Inuchiyo! Oi, don't strip anymore!!"

A chaotic scene...

Yoshiharu was starved for air under the bodies of three half naked girls.

"Oh yeah, I remembered!"

I hadn't gotten the promised kiss from Nobuna, I've finally remembered it.

I...I...It's not like I want to k...ki...kis...kiss Nobuna or something, but, but if I don't get the reward quickly, that petty woman might regret and find an excuse to reject it, it will definitely be so!

"Ohhhhh! No matter what, I must find Nobuna!"

Energy full, spirit beyond full! In an instant Yoshiharu climbed out and away from these pillows made by the girls.

"Ahhh..."

"Ohh, Onii-sama is fired up!"

"....What shocking determination."

"I'm sorry but I have to go out." Yoshiharu explained and rushed out with the speed of a champion Olympic runner.

"I...I...I...It's not like I like Nobuna or something!! I...I...I ... I just want to fix that petty woman's bad habit of always regretting the rewards promised to her retainers! Yes, those retainers who were denied the reward will definitely be angry, and might revolt at any moment! It's a responsibility of me as a retainer to prevent that!!"

Running ahead...

Running down a street under a moonlit sky.

"Nobuna should be at Honnou Temple now. I had visited there during my school trip to Kyoto, but that Honou Temple was different from the one where Nobuna is staying. It's the new Honou temple that was built on another location after the Honou temple was burned down during the 'Incident at Hounouji'. So this Hounou Temple of the sengoku era, yes, it should be at the side of the Myoukaku Temple where I was staying...."

Ahhh...

This is Kyoto.

It is different from the modernized city full of public streets that I saw during my school trip.

Straight dirt paths.

I'm using my own legs to run in the Kyoto of the sengoku era.

Yoshiharu was so excited that he almost let out a shout .

Nobuna...

You, the attack at Okehazama, the siege of Inabayama castle, heading towards the capitial, and your life's greatest crisis, the Retreat at Kanegasaki, you have survived through it all.

In the history that I learned from sengoku games, Oda Nobunaga will fall into the 'Entrapment of Oda' orchestrated by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiaki.

But this world's shogun is Imagawa Yoshimoto who you spared in battle, and after coming to Kyoto, she had been engrossed with soccer and playing around. She can't even thank you enough, so plotting a revolt is impossible.

If that's the case, who is the mastermind planning a revolt? If it's really like 'Even if the method is different, the flow of history won't change', then there will definitely be someone secretly plotting the 'Entrapment of Oda'....!

The historic knowledge I have from the games and this world has started to split, and I will become more and more useless from now on.

The guarding strategy during Kanegasaki also failed.

Maybe some time in the future, no, very soon, I won't be of help to you.

But, even so,

Definitely...

The one thing I must do is stop the 'Incident at Honouji'.

Juubei-chan who admires you so much would never think to revolt against you.

Hanbei had once mentioned, 'The strength to return history to it's path'; if it really exist, then there might be someone else replacing Juubei-chan and launching the 'Incident at Honouji' . That person may be among the retainers now.

Or maybe, it's someone that I have not seen before.

No idea how it will happen

But even though I have no idea how, I will definitely protect you.

The future where you did not die at Honou temple, the other future that I was not born in, no matter what, I want to see it.

I must have come to this sengoku era for this reason alone.

A thing like being delayed by the Mori clan and and arriving too late to stop the 'Incident at Honouji'... I definitely don't want it to happen.

I'm just a useless high school student compared to Tokichirou-jii-san, but I will surpass him in just this. No, I must surpass him!

Even if... I must replace you and be burned to ashes there... I'm willing to...

....

....

....

Part 9

Finally here

Honou temple at night.

It was almost like a fortress.

Drains outside it, the walls are as high as one could see , and an epic-ness that makes people exclaim, "Is this a temple within a city!?"

So this is it, a place most suitable to house Nobuna.

"Oh! Guards! It's been tough on you! Please pass a message saying, Sagara Yoshiharu is here to collect the promised reward!"

"Sagara-sama, please wait."

"....Eh?"

The gates were opened immediately, and the servants brought Yoshiharu inside.

"It's here, Hime is waiting for you inside."

At a room inside the castle, Yoshiharu can't help but swallow his saliva.

Thanks.

"Ah...Ehhh? I came in so simply... Nobuna, did you say that the reward is cancelled? Oioi, just what is going on here...?"

Suddenly he became excited. His stomach clenched, his throat went dry and his heart was thumping like it was almost going to explode. Yoshiharu almost pathetically said, "I think I should go back."

"No, nononononono, this was the decision of my petty master! And, it's just a k...k...ki...kiss! I won't do anything more than it! B...Bu...But, there isn't anyone around... What the hell am I talking about!? UWAHHHHH~!"

With trembling hands, he violently pushed the doors open.

There was someone in the room.

A girl sitting in seiza.

Wearing a white robe... Shibata Katsuie.

"Uhhh, Uhhhhhhh...."

With an expression almost close to tears, Katsuie shivered on the spot.

"Ehh, why is it you, Katsuie!?"

"No, no, no, umm, didn't I promise you before, if you came back alive, I will let you touch my breasts all you want? .....Uwahhhh! I... I said that thinking that you would definitely die, but who would have expected it, you really came back alive...! So, to fulfill that promise, I have made up my mind!"

"H...Huh? I had forgotten all about that promise which because you said it so casually! Rather, where is Nobuna ?"

"Uwahh, Uwahh, uwahhhhhh... C...Come! Touch them ! Don't be merciful and touch all you want! *Sob*... I'm about to be dirtied... *Sob*Sob*Sob* Ahh... Save me... Mother....!"

"Don't be like this, I said I have something on with Nobuna... And since you hate this to the point of crying,

it's alright if I don't touch you, okay? I'm the one who should be crying with you hurting me like this!"

"Sa...Sa...Samurais do not go back on their word! Do you want me to commit seppuku, Saru!? Just how much of a bastard are you....!"

"....If I don't touch it... You will commit seppuku?"

"I...Is...Isn't that obvious!? If I abandon the promise exchanged using our lives in the battlefield, I...I...I can't be called a samurai! Doesn't that mean I can only commit seppuku!? B...Bu...B...But to be touched by a Saru like you, ahh, maybe seppuku is better... N...Nooooo!"

"....If I touch them, you will let me go meet Nobuna?"

"Sob...Sobsob... Ahh, I got it! I will let you see her! So hurry and touch them, hurry and get this over with!"

Uhh...

I had totally forgotten all about the promise made before the Retreat at Kanegasaki at that hellish battlefield, but there's no other choice, right...?

To attack Nobuna after coming to Honou temple, I must first break through Katsuie.

"Well, Nobuna has rejected my rewards countless times, so it should be ok for me to accept such an extra reward, right?"

Yoshiharu's arrogant mind began acting up again.

"Cough... Well... There's no helping it then. Since you say you will commit seppuku if I don't touch them, my only choice is to touch them. It's only natural to help each others out."

"Uhhh, Uhhhh... So you are really touching!?"

"No, though I'm ok with whatever you choose, if the Oda clan's strongest were to commit seppuku, we will all be troubled."

"Sob... Mama... Uhhhhhh... Enough, come and touch them!"

"Somehow, it feels like I'm doing something really bad. .." Yoshiharu sat in seiza in front of Katsuie.

And then, he timidly raised both hands.

Just ahead of his hands, two proud melon shaped breasts are waiting.

"*Gulp* As an extra reward, this is the best, I...I'm digging in."

Not knowing why, his words were excessively formal.

Yoshiharu spread his fingers, and slowly touched the universe's best paradise...

- Boin*

"W...What softness...!?"

"Uwahhh, Uwahhhhhh... Ehh, you really touched them, you bastard Saru!"

"....So...So...SO... SO GOOD....!"

Just like the first Apollo moon landing; one small step for man, and one giant leap for mankind!

Even if Katsuie beats me into a pulp right after this, I have no more regrets.

"Ma.... Maybe just a bit more fingernail into it... what will happen...?"

- Rub*

"Ehhhhhh, Uhh, Uwahhhh, my breasts were really touched by Saru...! No longer... I can no longer be married!"

"Th...Th...Th...This....! Full of bounciness, my fingers inside the breasts were bounced out!? Why is this, Katsuie? Why do you have such embarrassing weapons!? "

- Rub*Rub*Pinch*

Uwahh, it's the best. Even if it's through the robe, I can really feel the size of it... the softness...

"Ohhhh!? You gotta be joking, this... this is how tits really feel!? As expected of a girl! I...I'm so glad to be alive, my tears just won't stop!"

"Sa...Saru! Ah... Noo! To rub like this... It's no good to rub like this! Ow... it hurts!"

"Ahh, S...s...s...sorry, I got too excited without realizing ...! Woah, my han... hands were sucked in, I can't take them away! What is this, what is going on!?"

"I...I'm gonna be broken. It's still my first time, be more gentle, baka!"

"This is the universe's greatest treasure that humanity has asked for all these years!"

"D...Do...Do....Don't say such meaningless words! There should be something else, something else you should say to a girl at a time like this."

"S...So...Sor...Sorry Katsuie, I'm so excited I think I fried my brain...! Wh...What a comfortable feeling... That Gousei had been ignoring all of this, the big idiot! Breasts SAIKOU!"

"Uhhhh! I'm so embarrassed, too embarrassed, hurry and let this end!"

Just as the two of them became fully oblivious to what was happening around them...

- Kacha*

The door was suddenly dragged open, and a woman dressed in the same white robe attire as Katsuie Nobuna was slowly entering the room, a step at a time.

"...Hi...Hime-sama!?"

"Eh!? Nobuna!?"

...

...

...

In this short period, Yoshiharu experienced a quietness like that on the surface of the moon in the dead of space.

As if wearing a noh mask, the expressionless Nobuna stood there for a long period of time, and finally opened her mouth to speak.

"...Hoo... So it's like this, compared to kissing with me, Katsuie's big breasts are better. I say. That's how it is; compared to my lips, you like Riku's fat-filled breasts. Coming from the future monkey kingdom, you said before that in your monkey country of the future, big breasts like Riku's are very, very popular, I see I see...

Huh... I had all sorts of delusions for what was going to happen tonight, but I had totally not thought of a situation like this... Saru totally forgetting the promise with me and ran over to Riku to have a rendezvous, and having such a lewd face rubbing Riku's breasts..."

"Um... Nobuna?"

"No...It's not like this, Hime-sama! This is definitely not a rendezvous, it's just a promise made at Kanegasaki. .. Uhh... uhhhhh....!"

"Shut up! Riku! Well done, how dare you feed the monkey that I[5] keep."

"Uhh..Uhhhh, Hime-sama is really angry...! I can't be married anymore after being played by Saru, yet now I have even lost the love of Hime-sama~! I.. I'm already used goods....!"

Uwahhhh, Katsuie sank her face into the tatami and started sobbing.

"...Ehhh... Riku is crying so sadly... Ohh... And I was thinking that there was something weird, I see. Saru forcefully pushed himself on Riku who hates him, and ignoring Riku's defenses, he rubbed Riku's breasts. All the fault lies with Saru, as expected, this is what happened..."

"Ehhh!? It's not like this! I...I'm here for your reward... Katsuie, this isn't a time to be crying! Come and explain everything to Nobuna, Katsuie!"

"No more words from you!"

- Klang*

Faster than any magic trick and twice as terrifying, suddenly Nobuna's hand held the renowned sword, " Heshikiri Hasebe", and just as suddenly she slashed at Yoshiharu's neck without even thinking.

At the nick of time, Yoshiharu rolled to the side and avoided it.

"Uwahh!? Wait, that was really out for my life! If I had been slower by half a second, you would have completely removed my head!"

"NO MERCY TO GIRL ASSAULTING VILLAINS LIKE YOU! Ahhhh, I, who had all kinds of delusions by myself and was troubled by it was like an idiot!"

"Eh? Delusions? What is that?"

"SHUT UP! I WON'T FORGIVE YOU TODAY, YOU ERO-SARU! GO TO HELL~!"

"Ka..Ka...Ka...Katsuie, I beg you, explain to her!"

"Uwahhhh.... Hime-sama... Hime-sama is so angry because Saru touched my breasts, I had never seen

Hime-sama so angry before, as expected, as expected Hime-sama likes Saru, and upon finding Saru being frivolous, she likes him to the point of killing him! HIME-SAMA!!"

Yoshiharu ran out with all his might.

Out of Honou temple, and rushing down the dirt path lit by moonlight.

"Oi, I said wait! You demonic Saru that sneaks onto humans! Why did you run!? Hurry and show me your neck for me to cut it off!"

"You, calm down and listen to my explanations!"

"NOT LISTENING NOT LISTENING NOT LISTENING NOT LISTENING! DEFINITELY NOT LISTENING! YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF FEELINGS I..I...I...I..I...I...I HAD WHEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME? BUT, BUT, WHY DID YOU RUN TO RUB RIKU'S BIG BREASTS SO SHAMELESSLY!?"

"Eh? Wait? What did you just say?"

"N.O.T.H.I.N.G! Anyway, just go to hell!"

Hoo...

- Slash*

Uwahhh, just a little more and I'm dead.

She is serious this time.

Nobuna went into Demon lord mode!?

If I'm caught, I will definitely be killed!

Yoshiharu ran throughout the night streets, all the while shouting "DAMN IT... WHY DID THINGS BECOME LIKE THIS!? DAMN IT!"

"WAIT! YOU FRIVOLOUS BASTARD!"

That night, the people in Kyoto spread a terrible rumor , that, "The sixth demon lord who almost burned Mount Hiei is swinging her sword wildly to banish a demonic monkey that appeared in the city this time." Even when Yoshiharu screamed, "SAVE ME!" and knocked on the doors, no one would open for him.

~Translator's Notice: For more info on updates, please visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/OdaNobunaLN.Eng/

Chapter 5 : Furinkazan's Flag

Part 1

Southern Omi, Lake Biwa's winter.

After signing the peace agreement, Nobuna immediately lead an army out to Southern Omi. Expecting a struggle, instead she found the Rokoku clan had retreated back to Kouga. Equally surprising was the familiar face that greeted her.

"Hohoho, Nobuna-dono, there is no need to worry anymore.” rang out the cheery voice of Saitou Dousan.

Dousan, who accompanied Nobuna to Kyo, had been forced back to Mino by those grannies that were chasing him for his debts. After that, he received news that Takeda Shingen planned to head to Kyo as well, and had tightened his security. Even after hearing about Nobuna's assassination at Kirara Hill during the “Retreat at Kanegasaki” by the Asai Asakura allied forces, he had endured and kept guard at Gifu, carefully observing the situation.

If he had tried to save Nobuna, Gifu castle would have been completely open to Takeda Shingen's attacks from Kai. Dousan had no choice but to endure through this situation.

After receiving reports of "Nobuna coming back" and " the Asai Asakura allied troops retreating from Mount Hiei", Dousan could resolve himself to travel to Southern Omi in the midst of such a situation.

With such chaotic rumors surrounding Nobuna-dono's life, Takeda Shingen wouldn't possibly move out without figuring out the truth.

"The main danger to Kyoto right now is the Southern Omi's Rokoku Clan having control over the southern side of Lake Biwa. So, if I defeat the Rokoku Clan at the same time the Asai Asakura allied troops retreat, Kyoto and Mino will once again be linked and we will clear this danger."

Without hesitation, Dousan lead his troops on hand and attacked the Rokoku clan. Using the frightening strategies he had once acquired as "The Viper", he defeated the Rokoku Clan.

The only thing that Dousan had not expected was Asai Hisamasa retreating back to Odani castle through the middle of his battle. Upon find him and the Rokoku Clan battling with each other, Hisamasa decided, "Though the Rokoku Clan is the enemy of our Asai Clan, right now it only makes sense to help each other." and joined the Rokoku forces attacking Dousan.

Dousan was overwhelmingly outnumbered, but due to “The Viper's” cunning strategies, he broke the formation of the Asai army and the confused enemy collapsed. Asai Hisamasa was forced to retreat with his remaining troops to Odani castle.

Seeing that the Asai army had been totally defeated, the Rokoku Clan dispersed without hesitation and fled back to Kouga. With this victory in the "Battle of Yasu River", Dousan gained the territory of Southern Omi.

The Oda Clan who had been isolated at Kyoto was once again reunited with their base at Mino due to Dousan's preemptive strike.

After finally meeting Dousan, Nobuna gave Niwa Nagahide command of the troops with the order to rest for half a day.

And at this time.

Nobuna pitched a tent at Mount Azuchi of the eastern side of Lake Biwa and the three of them looked at the wide lake, appreciating the scenery over dinner. The other two were...

"Nobuna-dono, I'm sorry for not being able to help much during this crisis of the Oda clan. This is my fault for fleeing back to Mino from those grannies." Saitou Dousan said, narrowing his eyes.

"Hoho, say the truth. It's because you were afraid to meet me again, Viper-dono." Matsunaga Hisahide retorted with a smile as she held out tea and snacks to Dousan.

Dousan broke out in sweat as his body started shivering.

"According to your personality, are those tea and snacks poisoned?"

"Don't worry, Yoshiharu-dono has warned me."

"Oh…? You can't compete with that guy either; as expected of him." Dousan praised. "He's a strange fellow,

but his feelings for Nobuna-sama make even mine feel shallow in comparison."

"Your love is that of a bad mother, I think." Dousan laughed.

"Ara, I don't want to hear that from you. I am not the one here that has done something worth my master banishing me. I'm a woman full of love and loyalty."

"Didn't I say that there was nothing I could do during that situation?"

"Signing the contract to give Mino to Nobuna-sama, yet ending up in such a state; not a single person would believe you."

Saitou Dousan and Matsunaga Hisahide.

The two, though they laughed and smiled at each other, if either decided to go head to head they would be able to finish each other off at any time they wanted.

"The Viper and Scorpion are actually old acquaintances. I did not know anything about that. Just how much did this geezer borrow from you, Danjo?"

Like a daughter sitting between the two of them, Nobuna smiled.

Dousan and Hisahide avoided each other's glances, both revealing bitter smiles.

These two did not share a simple creditor and debtor kind of relationship.

Both were once in love with each other. A couple that almost became husband and wife in the process of conquering the world together. But their relationship suffered between their individual ambitions, and in the end, they regrettably split after a violent argument.

Dousan thought that to conquer the world, one must first claim Mino, but Hisahide was fixated with her revenge on the evil nobles of Kyoto, wanting Kyoto as the first objective. Dousan had retorted, "Kyoto is too difficult to defend to serve as a base. One should prepare an army and open up commerce in Mino, waiting till the time is ripe. One can then head into Kyo and conquer the world." and thought that Hisahide's mindset was too immature.

But what really hurt Hisahide was Dousan's unintentional words, "Your dream is nothing but a

personal grudge. You have been blinded by your feelings and are now unable to see the situation clearly. This isn't how someone aiming for the world should be."

The two had thought that their paths in life would never cross again.

But now, due to a girl called Nobuna, they miraculously intersected once again.

"Haha, because it's been so long ago, I had forgotten just how much he borrowed from me, huh?"

"The interest is quite frightening, it's no longer possible to even estimate it."

"Don't tell me, you never thought we would once again meet like this and become comrades?"

"Yeah, the fates of people are really mysterious."

Dousan shared a look with Hisahide, seeming to say...

The grudges of the past. Just let it be over.

The both of them had given up their own rights to happiness for their own ambition.

In the end, they were not able to get married in this lifetime.

But now, they had a common daughter.

Someone that was able to inherit their ambition of conquering the world and extend their dream. That is their daughter, their shining pride.

An irreplaceable treasure.

Hisahide too sent her feelings to Dousan, her eyes explaining her heart in ways words failed.

Not afraid of me who was from another country. Admiring me like a real mother. Nobuna is just so cute that I can't help it.

"Look, the sun is slowly setting at the direction of Mount Hiei."

"So beautiful..." With glittering eyes, Nobuna pointed to the west and said.

Under the reflection of the winter Lake Biwa, the setting sun seemingly set the skies ablaze.

Birds floated around the surface of the lake.

Dousan and Hisahide, their hearts were now linked together with Nobuna.

"How good would it be, if such a peaceful time could continue forever..."

"At the other side of Lake Biwa, my brother and Asai Nagamasa are trapped on Chikubu Island."

"Please don't worry, Nobuna-sama."

"Uhhh, the ninja Goemon will definitely bring the two of them back safely, so there is nothing to worry about. Once the two of them return to your side, we can once again begin the battle to conquer the world."

"Anyway, Nobuna-dono, I heard Hisahide had prepared lots of strong drugs to keep you in a blurry state for quite some time. Please be more careful about the drugs this woman prepares."

"Uhh, Yoshiharu has lectured me about that already. I will be more careful next time."

"Hisahide too. It's not good to dote excessively on a child while saying 'so cute, so cute'. Miyoshi Nagayoshi ruined his health due to drinking your drug for long periods of time, no? It's time you grow up."

"What should I do? I might never grow up in this lifetime. See, I have no husband even now, so~"

"Uhh, such a lamenting tone, please don't look at me like that."

Looking at the birds disappearing in the horizon, Nobuna gave a soft laugh.

"Such beauty, it's almost like in my dreams."

On impulse, she sang the song she loved.

"'A man's life of 20 years, compared to the age of the world, it's like a fleeting dream. Those that were born in this world, will not be spared from death. But I do not think so. Life is short. The end will come no matter what. Maybe, the world itself is nothing but a dream, but, isn't the dream that I saw after drinking Danjo's drug a dream too? No matter which world, it's all but a dream.'"

But when Dousan tried to respond, Nobuna laughed and continued.

"But, I love this dream of a world much, much more! Because, there are comrades that are chasing after the same dream as me! No matter what kind of beautiful dream, it would be too lonely to follow it alone. No matter what kind of imperfect dream, even if I'm in a world that won't change to something I hope for, even if that lecherous Saru was a little frivolous, or a booby fiend. To me, I still love this world where I can be together with everyone!"

Dousan too. Hisahide too.

Gently caressing Nobuna's head, they hoped to display the nameless words in their hearts.

Dousan prayed sincerely, hoping that this peaceful time could continue like this forever.

"Senpai, let us accompany Nobuna-sama and eat some takoyaki. I can meet my old master Dousan-sama too."

"Look at this atmosphere a little, Juubei-chan. This isn't the time for us to interrupt."

"Uhh, you have a point. Anyway Senpai, the 50 arquebus that I lent you at Kanegasaki, it's about time you gave them back."

"I'm sorry, but I can only return about half the arquebus."

"The interest is very high. If you don't return them as soon as possible, the money you need to return will become higher and higher."

At the foot of Mount Azuchi.

Yoshiharu and Mitsuhide stood guard, protecting Nobuna. They were both quarreling as normal.

"But, Juubei-chan, you are the first to become a master of a castle. Damn it, I thought I would be the first. Damn it!"

"Hoho, Sagara-senpai could not be compared to this genius Mitsuhide. Isn't this normal for the fair Nobuna-sama?"

"After leading the back troops of Kanegasaki, my reward was just a persimmon, and the promise of a kiss was completely ignored. Instead, why was Juubei-chan

given Omi's 50,000 dan worth of land in Sakamoto? I can't accept that; don't you think it's unacceptable? And, that persimmon was rotten! Don't tell me, that was a punishment for touching Katsuie's breasts!?"

"It's enough to give a Saru a persimmon, Nobuna-sama said so very angrily, Senpai."

"Ahhh.... Katsuie said after that, 'Though I agreed to let you touch them, I didn't say you could rub them!' and is now aiming for my life... What is this..."

"She was obviously merely joking. Besides, if Senpai's life is ever truly threatened, this genius swordswoman, the esteemed and beautiful Juubei Mitsuhide will protect Saru-senpai this whole life by your side, so there is no need to worry!"

Mitsuhide smiled as she held on to Yoshiharu's hand.

Again, she looks like she has a hidden agenda or something? But.... Such an honest smile; as expected, she's a cute kouhai. Yoshiharu thought as his gaze met hers.

Mitsuhide's thoughts began to wander to what happened during her stay at Honnou temple, when Nobuna had suddenly called her over.

Part 2

"At that time, Nobuna-sama was....."

Nobuna requested the other retainers leave as she began her secret discussion with Mitsuhide.

"To control Mount Hiei, I wish for Juubei to control the eastern side of Lake Biwa, the area of Sakamoto. The Sakamoto area connects Mount Hiei and the gate of Kyoto, a strategic point of interest. I don't want this location falling into the hands of the Asai Asakura clans. Juubei, build a castle there to suit your tastes."

"Roger. I shall oversee the construction work in Sakamoto immediately, and guard against the Asai Asakura allied forces." The talented Mitsuhide accepted, and immediately replied "Let's start with the designs." as she began discussing with Nobuna the details of the castle.

"As for the castle, I wish for you to do this." Nobuna started, voicing some of the ideas she had in mind.

The era of mountain fortresses was already over.

To adapt to the era of Tanegashima, the future fortress would find greater success on flat lands.

With a mountain fortress, because it's an obvious target, an arquebus squad can very quickly destroy the walls under concentrated fire, easily compromising the entire base.

The most important thing a fortress needed in this arquebus era was....

"Water".

If we dig a wide trench beside the fortress and fill it with water, it will effectively defend against enemy attacks.

If one wanted to use "water" effectively like this, castles constructed near lakes or rivers are obviously more suitable than mountain fortresses. These are called "a castle on the plains", or to be more accurate, a "water fortress".

"If we build a castle at Sakamoto, the best choice is to place its back to Lake Biwa, then dig a trench around the front of it to form a 'water fortress'. A base on water like Sakamoto Castle will greatly speed Nobuna-sama's

travels across Lake Biwa as well. With this, an emergency like that at Kiyomizu Temple will be dealt with swiftly too.

"And though it has nothing to do with battles, Hisahide-dono had built a strange 4-storey castle at Tamonyamajo in Yamato. In Japan, it is a beautiful palace called 'Shining with Brightness'. I, Mitsuhide, having heard this name, visited Yamato and performed intensive research on the building methods of that castle. I too planned to build that on Sakamoto; to build a castle that makes people feel soon this chaotic era will end and peace will come!

"Wh...What do you think about it, Nobuna-sama?"

"Juubei, that idea is fabulous. Though it's kinda bad to use Danjo's creativity, you are really a remarkable genius ."

"Not at all, not at all. Your praise has me a bit flustered ."

Ahhh, I'm praised again by Nobuna-sama, my talent is so terrifying.

"Let's do it like you said, but Sakamoto Castle won't need any temporary masters."

"Hmmm, what does that mean?"

"I'll give you Sakamoto castle. You will be the real master of it, and this land worth 50,000 dan!"

"M...Me being a daimyo of a province!? But, I, Mitsuhide have only joined the Oda clan recently! A... And if we think about the contribution, Sagara-senpai who lead the back troops at Kanegasaki should be the master!"

"Anything is fine for Saru. He's just an idiot who became excited from rubbing Riku's breasts."

"Y...Yes. But though I, Mitsuhide am smart and witty, have a distinguished bloodline and am a rare bishoujo, and therefore this decision seems as much like common sense as the sun rising from the east and setting on the west, I am not as active as Sagara-senpai."

"Juubei, didn't you save Saru with no care for your own safety? If Juubei had given up when you saw Saru blown to pieces at Misaka Pass, then Saru would definitely be dead."

"That is so, but umm, that was just because I didn't notice the atmosphere, and my personality of not giving up on things I start isn't something to be proud of."

Suddenly, Nobuna-sama tightly grabbed Mitsuhide's hands, big tears welling from the corners of her eyes.

"Thank you so much, really, thank you so much!"

Nobuna-sama, who had never lowered her head towards her retainers to cry, sobbed with her joy. Mitsuhide's chest felt a flow of warmth.

If it's for this master, Juubei Mitsuhide was willing to give everything for her. She honestly believed it.

It's just that, her heart seemed to be rumbling with an ominous feeling.

"Thank you, thank you." Looking at Nobuna-sama with her face full of tears, her body seemed to hurt, as though she was being poked with needles.

Why was this so? Even I, the smart and witty Mitsuhide cannot understand.

"From now on, I'm relying on you for Saru too. That fellow will run to dangerous places muttering weird things to himself if we don't look at him properly. He is so weak, yet he has such strange courage, but if Juubei is protecting him by his side, I can relax a little."

Ehhh!? To Nobuna-sama, Sagara-senpai is a retainer, no, a family member. Such an important existence, this is without a doubt the truth.

But, don't tell me, she is planning to let I, Mitsuhide and Sagara-senpai, ummm, marry!?!?!?

Th...That's too troubling... Umm, that Sagara-senpai is like a child that was doted on by his mother; it's cute, but if I were to choose between liking or disliking, u...uh..umm.... I don't dislike him but liking him or something, it's still debatable but, to senpai who was forced to leave his mother, I think someone who loves him and takes care of him is necessary. Once I

recalled what happened in that cave, my body somehow began to feel hot, th...though it was to save him, bu...but I did have body contact with senpai already... Mi... Mitsuhide already belongs to senpai!?

All in all, Juubei Mitsuhide was so embarrassed she felt she could die, but since it was Nobuna-sama's order, her only choice was to marry senpai.

"Roger, since this is the order of Nobuna-sama, then you can leave Sagara-senpai's matters to me!"

"Thanks, I will never forget my debt to Juubei for saving Saru. I will be indebted to you till the end of my life."

The Sakamoto of Southern Omi is a reward for saving Sagara-senpai... If that's the case, then I will accept it.

Of course, Nobuna-sama forbade Mitsuhide from discussing this with Saru.

"All in all, I, Juubei Mitsuhide will from now on take care of senpai. Though it's hard to think of them as the same person, the arrogant daytime senpai is actually a

child who loves to snuggle around his mother, and the only one who knows this humiliating fact is me, Mitsuhide. Hohoho."

"Anyway, why are you happily smiling by yourself, Juubei-chan? What is going on?"

"B...But, a girl to be forced into marriage isn't something to get used to. And I'm busy in coming up with the design plans for Sakamoto castle now. But, as I finish each of them one by one, it's only a matter of time until we hold the marriage. Of course I'm not happy about it at all, but because it's my master's order, I have no choice~"

"I have totally no idea what you are saying, but won't there be problems if you become strange like this after becoming a daimyo?"

"Not at all not at all, because this Sakamoto castle will one day belong to Sagara-senpai too. There is nothing to worry about."

"Huh? What does that mean!?"

"You're too much. To ask a bride to say such things before getting married , Ahnnn~."

"Is this part of her strange motives? It must be a new way to fool with me."

That day, Mitsuhide had fallen into quite a big misunderstanding, completely due to her light feelings of her first love. But Yoshiharu did not notice it at all.

Part 3

"Oichi, be strong, someone will definitely come save us ."

"Hmmm, Kanjuurou too. Is your body condition still ok?"

"No need to worry. Don't judge me by my appearance. I have confidence in my body strength, hahaha!"

"But, your voice doesn't seem too energetic."

These voices found themselves on the lone island of Lake Biwa, Chikubu Island.

In this island's prison cells, Hisamasa had imprisoned the current "Oichi" Asai Nagamasa, and the previous " Oichi" Tsuda Kanjuurou.

The cell imprisoning the cross-dressing beauty Nagamasa was a grand single room. With 3 grand meals everyday, her treatment was of the highest quality, so she was still well. Nagamasa's imprisonment amounted to nothing more than her father grounding her here because of her unrelenting objection to betraying Nobuna .

But at the other side of the tunnel, Nobusumi was imprisoned in a small, wet stone cell. Every day, the guards would feed Nobusumi with only watery gruel. The ceiling of the stone cell was so low he couldn't even stand up straight.

If this went on, Nobusumi would become weaker and weaker until he died here.

Nagamasa had repeatedly pleaded with the guards, saying, "At least put me at the same cell as Kanjuurou.", but the guards always rejected, explaining "Master ordered us to not let both of you near each other." with a shake of their heads.

Catching Nobusumi and learning that he was actually a guy, Hisamasa had roared, "That bastard Oda Nobuna, how dare you treat me like a fool!?" and planned to kill Nobusumi to vent some of his anger.

But, after considering that Nobusumi had worth as a hostage, he finally banished both of them to Chikubu island.

Of course, the cells were not together.

So, Nagamasa and Nobusumi couldn't even touch each other with their fingers.

In the dark prison, they couldn't even see each other clearly.

Their only connection was their weak voices.

This couple, though born into different clans of this sengoku era, while imprisoned could not endure being unable to see or touch each other.

Maybe the guards pitied the fate of this beautiful Owari and Omi couple, as they had never disturbed the soft conversation before.

Even now, they were waiting patiently in this underground prison.

"It's okay Oichi, get a hold of yourself. Though I overheard the guards spouting rumors about Aneue being assassinated, how can Aneue be finished off so easily? She will definitely come and save us."

"Hmmm."

Nobusumi whispered again, "I'm sure Saru-kun has already sent his ninja to Northern Omi. We will have our chance to escape at any time now."

And again, "Kanjuurou, I must take back the position of head from Father. If I don't go save Aneue, the chaotic era of this country will never end."

"I've made up my mind, but that is extremely hard on you."

"Father has almost never left Omi; he knows nothing. This is no time to be killing each other in such a small island country."

The both of them stared at the weak sunlight coming in through a hole as if praying.

- Boom*

A sudden explosion resounded at the entrance!

"Ahh, it's ninja-kun!" Nobusumi exclaimed.

"Asai-shi, Tsuda-shi, it's been too long. I, who even scare crying babies to silence is bere(here)!"

"Leading the lolicon comrades of the Kawanami clan as chief protector of Boss's soft skin, Maeda is here too!"

"To protect the boss, our eternal idol, the Kawanami clan appears!"

"Comrades, get this princess and the little one off Chikubu island."

Their help had finally arrived.

Immediately after they were released, Nobusumi and Nagamasa embraced each other in a grip to challenge even death.

The future seemed much brighter suddenly....!

"Leave your words for later! For now, we should escape from here!"

"Ohh, that's true, Ninja-kun."

"I will negotiate directly with Father now."

"Asai-shi, right now we should escape to somewhere safe! Please leave negotiating or things like that for later."

"No, I want to go to Odani castle. I have to take back the position of clan head!"

"No, Asai Hisamasa wouldn't listen to a word you say right now! Besides, that man isn't at Odani castle!"

"What? What do you mean?"

"Ninja-kun, Oichi, hurry! The soldiers are here!"

The Asai army had rushed to the scene, though Goemon's smokescreens were temporarily slowing them down.

With the danger made so clear, Asai Nagamasa mounted the horse Maeda brought, pulled Tsuda

Nobusumi onto the horse and set him in front of her, gripping him tightly.

As they fled, it became apparent why Goemon and the Kawanami clan had taken so long in their rescue; with careful planning. they had prepared a perfect escape route.

Not a single enemy soldier could avoid the traps the Kawanami clan had prepared beforehand.

"Come, onto the boat!"

"We're indebted to you, Ninja-kun!"

"Kanjuurou!'

Holding each other's hands, they both jumped aboard the boat.

"Now, let's hurry and head out."

Once the boat was properly on Lake Biwa it quickly picked up speed, all but gliding across the water.

The Kawanami comrades, skilled as they were in water battles, cried out, "This place is forbidden to pass through." and flipped their enemies' boats upside down.

"Hahahaha! This isn't some cave, and your enemies aren't mere prisoners! Once you enter the water, you're in Kawanami clan's world!"

"We are the heroes who created the Ichiya Castle legend!"

"Perfect, with this, we have gained Boss's praises!"

Sighing with relief, Goemon informed to Nagamasa and Nobusumi, "Hime-sama is currently safe."

"The Oda army is currently pacing(facing) off with the Asai Asakura allied forces at Mount Hiei. After we finished what we are boing(doing) here, we will beet(meet) with them immediately. Bow(Now), we cannot belay(delay) even a bingle(single) minute."

Nobusumi and Nagahide, not even trying to understand Goemon as her speech deteriorated, were glancing at Lake Biwa's reflection of the moon as they talked with each other.

"Our clans have avoided a direct confrontation! And the palace decree had given us a temporary peace agreement. Isn't this what we want? This is our best chance to recover the alliance between the Asai and Oda clan."

"After abandoning Aneue, I had given up on the dream of conquering the world with her. But, who would have thought that I could have the chance to fight together with her for her dream one more time?"

"Anyway, I'm in that dream too, though I'm on the back seat, hahaha!"

"You're more important than that; aren't you my husband? Just stay by my side and try your best."

"Hmmm."

"Though it's winter, it's so hot here... Ahh, as expected, love should be something that suave guys and beauties should have. Covered in sweat and dirt, we have no connection with it..." At Goemon's side, the Kawanami comrades watched the two of them jealously.

But...

Fate, it seemed, would not give them their happiness so easily.

Finally reaching the shore of Lake Biwa, just as Nagamasa and the rest were getting off the boat,

On the dark road beside the shore, almost by coincidence Nagamasa and the rest caught sight of the Asai Clan army, who were seemingly defeated.

No, it already could not be called an army.

"Hurry and run!"

"Mino's Viper, Mino's Viper is coming!"

"No way is he an equal opponent. Hisamasa-sama could not be compared with Viper at all."

"Hurry and escape back to Odani castle!"

They were totally decimated and had been consumed by fear.

There wasn’t a single soldier without injury or blood stains, but what made them most frightening were their delusions of Saitou Dousan.

"What is going on, Ninja-kun?"

"I'm afraid that on their way back to Odani castle, they bet(met) with Dousan-sama who was leading troops and were befeated(defeated)."

"Mino's Viper should not have that great a military force."

"On one side, the commander is renowned for his skill in battle. On the other, the commander is famous for being absolutely craven. Even ignoring the other great differences in their capabilities, with this alone Hisamasa was doomed."

"It seems like even superior numbers couldn't overcome these differences."

Just then,

They spotted the utterly injured Asai Hisamasa riding along with the defeated soldiers.

Hisamasa was wailing in regret.

Though he wasn't skilled in combat and suffered from severe cowardice, he had plucked up his courage and

fought to let his own child have a chance in obtaining the world.

But, with just a little more, first he failed to kill Nobuna, and then met Dousan on his retreat. His army was totally decimated, and the fate of the Asai clan hung by a thread.

“If I had just a little bit of talent for waging wars.... How can this be my legacy to Nagamasa...?" Hisamasa sank into a deep anguish.

As Nagamasa and the rest watched the defeated army in a daze, the 3 elders of the Asai clan finally spotted their spectators. All 3 of them were experienced generals, but due to the insurmountable difference between Hisamasa and Dousan, they could not display their prowess and seems to be greatly injured.

"Ohh, You are... Nagamasa-sama!?"

"Saruyashamaru-sama! You have come for your father ?"

"Without Nagamasa-sama's leadership at such a situation, we might not even be able to run!"

"Hisamasa-sama planned to commit seppuku upon reaching Odani castle! Saruyashamaru-sama, please abandon the grudge of your imprisonment at Chikubu Island and command us again."

"Please save the Asai clan!"

Nagamasa was speechless.

Right now in front of her eyes, the Asai clan was slowly moving towards oblivion.

Though the Oda clan did not seem to persue them, Hisamasa himself had decided to commit seppuku. Even the three elders in front of her had also resolved themselves to die with the Asai clan.

Father Hisamasa, or the elders, they believed in me, Saruyashamaru, that I should stand at the top of the world; that's why they betrayed the Oda clan.

Though I could feel the chasm that separates me from Oda Nobuna...

But I can't just to abandon father and retainers that believe in me!

"Nagamasa-sama!"

"I understand. I will return and take the title of Head of the Asai Clan."

"Thank you so much."

"Roger."

"With this, the Asai clan has hope again!"

In that moment, the shining star of a sengoku warrior, Asai Nagamasa became dark.

Nobusumi at her side was shocked,

"Oichi!? Won't this mean you'll cross swords with the Oda clan?"

"I can't just do nothing while father and the retainers are destroyed. I'm sorry, Kanjuurou."

Asai Nagamasa mounted the white horse the Asai soldiers brought over and turned towards Odani castle.

"In the end, I am the Asai clan's head, Asai Nagamasa. In the end, Oichi is just a dream that could only be destroyed... Farewell, Kanjuurou."

Nobusumi began to chase after her on foot.

"Wait, Oichi! You are no longer Saruyashamaru! You're my wife Oichi, aren't you!? If you betray Aneue, we will have to face each other as enemies!"

But, Nobusumi could not catch up.

The panicking soldiers formed a wave that blocked the road.

Nagamasa could not answer Nobusumi's shouts; she made up her mind not to turn back, even as she bit her lips hard enough to draw blood.

"HOW CAN THIS BE, IDIOT, HURRY AND COME BACK, OICHI! OICHI!"

Watching Nobusumi collapse onto the ground, Maeda and the Kawanami clan could offer no words of comfort.

Only Goemon spoke, stumbling across a long sentence that she isn't used to with a painful expression.

"Humans can not always get what they want. When she chose between Asai Nagamasa and Oichi, tbhe bne whbo is bost sab sbould be tbhe bhooser. Thbat berson, ber heart is most bikely bead. (the one who is most sad should be the chooser. That person, her heart is most likely dead.)

Such a pity...

Part 4

A short distance to the East, in the Kai province.

This mountain fortress lacked the typical huge castle suitable for a sengoku daimyo.

Tsutsujigasakikan.

A frugal styled house that was left over from Muromachi era.

The 19th clan head of the Takeda Clan, Takeda Shingen Harunobu once said "People are the castles, people are the walls, people are the trenches", meaning, " My retainers are the Takeda Clan's fortress". To enforce such words, she never built a castle at her own base in Kai, and never would.

The people of the sengoku era couldn't help but be impressed by this renowned warrior, Takeda Shingen.

But the truth was... Those were all lies.

Takeda Shingen wasn’t such a person.

As a base, the Tsutsujigasakikan was enough. A huge, defensive castle needed lots of money and wouldn't have been useful in the slightest to this warrior.

Shingen, all she could think of was the attack.

"It's meaningless to receive attacks from enemies upon your own land! Battles on other people's land are the only true battles! Because I have an attack, attack and attack personality!"

Yes.

Though Takeda Shingen had yet to reach 20 years of age, she was born into the distinguished Takeda clan, inheriting the responsibility of protecting Kai. But at the same time, she had inherited the same abnormal fascination with war her violent father had possessed.

People frequently described her simply as belligerent.

For Shingen, it was sensible. She had no interest whatsoever with Buddhist teachings, instead engrossing herself in "The art of war". In her martial arts skills, she had unsurpassable talents and had never lost a duel. Only Echigo's Uesugi Kenshin could stand against her on equal footing.

Like the embodiment of ambition, right after banishing her own father and becoming head of the clan, she led soldiers to attack Shinano. Unfortunately for Shingen, this abnormal action provoked "Justice's ally" Uesugi Kenshin, the Dragon of Echigo, and initiated a battle at Kawanaka island. That was the first time that Shingen, with her scoreboard filled with victories, struggled to defeat an enemy. But, even in the end when Shingen was forced to retreat, she shouted, "Kenshin, I will definitely

surpass you!! I have finally met a rival worthy of me! If not for this, things would be boring! Ahahahahaha!", her spirit and energy bursting out all at once.

But compared to Uesugi Kenshin, who had no desire for conquest, Shingen's defenses were weak. After hearing that her ally Imagawa Yoshimoto was captured, she abandon the alliance immediately and conquered Suruga, as expected from her "Attack is the best defense" thinking. Like a demon, she kept waging wars to enlarge her territory, and as a result the Takeda Clan controlled 1,200,000 dan worth of land.

Takeda Shingen was perhaps the strongest in this sengoku era.

Though she possessed enormous strength, Shingen also held perfect management over her retainers.

With her invincible cavalry at its core, her army was the strongest no matter what other soldiers she decided to add.

A sudden report, that "Oda Nobuna has burned Mount Hiei", would decide Takeda Shingen's next move.

Himiko-sama's brother, the high monk, Tendai head priest and master of Mount Hiei had travelled to Kai to plead with Shingen.

Shingen welcomed him warmly enough, but did not even attempt to mask her ambition, blatantly stating "If you are received by some wild monkey of Kai, the people will definitely be shocked. It's about time you give me a higher position in court, don't you think?"

Even though Kai is a poor province unable to grow its own wheat, using Shingen's technique, the province was able to procure mountains of gold by mining the area.

Shingen used this gold primarily to wage wars, almost to the point of looking frivolous, though the progress it allowed her in enlarging her territory was astounding. On the conquered lands, she also allocated an impressive budget on renovating the water works and preparing the land for farming. With the productivity within her territories growing exponentially, masses of people gathered, and the tax collected from them naturally grew . Shingen then used the money she gathered on her favorite, somewhat extravagant expanding policy, which surprisingly enough wasn't warring. Shingen had

immense interest in governing provinces too, as expected from a multi-talented warrior. In the end, because of her love for governing and desire to spar with her rival, Uesugi Kenshin, she had delayed her plans for heading to Kyo. If not for delicately governing these new territories with huge amounts of time and money and waging war every year with Uesugi Kenshin at Kawanaka island, within 5 years from Shingen becoming clan head, the world would have been conquered.

This is the strength of Shingen's army.

The strength of Uesugi Kenshin was only herself. If Kenshin was to fight on equal terms with Shingen, with Shingen's commanding skills, governing skills, the quality of her retainers, amount of the retainers under her command and their unwavering loyalty, Kenshin would be outclassed in almost every way.

It would be no exaggeration to call Shingen the overlord of this chaotic sengoku era.

Under her wealthy governance, the people all said, " Shingen-sama is such a good girl!" "We are relying on you for our village's water works!" "Leave it to us for the

construction of the dam of Shingen." and sincerely admired her.

"This is the way money should be used." Shingen wasn ’t just well liked by the people; she knew how to make the nobles happy too.

When Kyoto's monks and nobles visited Kai, she would always hold a grand party and receive them personally.

When Kyoto's Kampaku, Konoe Sakihisa sent the ominous letter with the lie "Nobuna had burned Mount Hiei", Kakujo was already at Tsutsujigasakikan and was attending a tea party with Shingen.

"This is a big matter. I no longer have a place to go back to."

"This Oda Nobuna is really worthy of the name Sixth Demon Lord! Hahaha!"

"Shingen-dono, this is no time for jokes, is it?"

"Don't cry, don't cry. I will build a new Mount Hiei for you, just like Kinkaku temple, a pure gold temple, ahahahaha!"

That senseless fake Mount Hiei will be troubling to me, and having to come all the way to Kai... Kakujo thought, but his fear of Shingen kept his voice securely in his head.

"Anyway, Kenshin-chan is now back into her old home of Echigo, and I have finish my work on Imagawa Yoshimoto's lands. So boring~ Ok, I will use this ' Burning of Mount Hiei' as a reason to fight Oda Nobuna and conquer Kyoto!"

Takeda Shingen stood up with gusto, unintentionally showing off fairly tall build and a bosom considered big for females of this era.

Tonsure? What is that[6]? Shingen had grown her hair past her waist, revealing a demure look inherited from her Kai origins. All but ruining that affect, fierce eyes like those of a hungry tiger made Shingen look violent and fierce rather than cute.

Takeda Bishi quickly dressed up her master's carnivore-like body. Her body was without a single fat, but like a girl, her curves and even the size of her breasts could be compared to Katsuie.

A demure appearance, a well bosomed body rare among the Japanese, fierce looks and Takeda Shingen's own forceful presence. All of them made Kakujo shiver with fear.

"Clerks, write it like this! Oi, Sixth Demon Lord, it's about time for me to go to Kyoto! You just wait for me, the Tendai Head Priest Takeda Shingen-sama to defeat you! Ok, that's it, beautiful!"

"U...Ummm, 'Tendai head priest' is my rank and position, could you not use it?"

"Huh? The most important of picking a fight is guts. Isn't it better to use a bigger rank and position to show off my strength? Don't mind such small details."

"Uhhh"

"Kansuke! Is Kansuke still alive!?"

- Bham*! At the same time Shingen kicked out, a small, single-eyed bald man silently appeared behind Kakujo.

"....Yamamoto Kansuke is here."

"Yamamoto Kansuke-sama, how is this possible? Didn't you die at Kawanaka island?"

Kakujo was shocked, and Yamamoto Kansuke sighed, "It's true that my strategies were found out by Uesugi Kenshin at Kawanaka island. To take responsibility, I had to rush to the front lines preparing to die.... But mysteriously, my life wasn't taken, and now I live with the shame of be alive."

"Kansuke! The battle this time around is extremely important to conquering the world! To me, your strength is necessary!"

"Yes."

Actually, this genius strategist Yamamoto Kansuke, who had just entered old age, couldn't seem to pull himself together before the battle with the Oda clan.

"I see, you have been devoid of motivation recently. You aren't fired up even after witnessing my beauty. This is troubling."

"It's a pervert's behavior to see their master's appearance and be excited. I have taken the tonsure and

been released from the mundane world. I will be very troubled if you treat me the same as those bastards."

"There's no helping it. Oi, Shirou! Shirou! Come over here for a while!" Shingen calls for her god-sister Shirou, shaking her head at Kansuke's behavior.

"I'm~here~ Onee-sama~!"

Takeda Shirou Katsuyori.

She is the princess of Shinano's House Suwa, recently defeated by Shingen.

Because she was remarkably adorable, Shingen, with her love for children, said, "Isn't it too pitiful for such a cute child to be banished or imprisoned?" and stopped the ninjas, taking Shirou as her god-sister.

Shirou turned 7 years old this year.

And she was still a naive and pure little girl.

"Shirou, come and sit on your sister's lap!"

This was pure love.

Nothing could taint the feelings between these two.

"Ohhhhh, Katsuyori-samaaaaaaa! How... This beautiful appearance, it's too radiant!"

"Shirou, say what I have taught you."

"Ok, Kansuke, please lend your strength to Onee-sama ." Shirou Katsuyori chimed as she bowed her head to Kansuke.

- Phew*

From Yamamoto Kansuke's nose spurted a geyser of blood.

"Ohhhhhhh~!? You can't... You can't do this, Katsuyori-samaaaaa! Don't bow to a lowly servant like me! Damn it, my nosebleed. I can't stop my nosebleed!"

Even his tone had grown unsteady.

This was truly a pure and untainted love!

"Roger! I, Yamamoto Kansuke will become a demon in this battle to cleanse off the taint on Kawanaka island." Kansuke declared, bowing to Shirou Katsuyori so low that he was on the floor.

When he lifted his head again, his face was no longer the face of a dried up, retired geezer, but once again that of the demon like strategist, a "black" aura emanating from all over his body.

"Hohoho! In the whole of Japan, only Echigo's Uesugi Kenshin can be on par with master-sama. Oda Nobuna, Saitou Dousan and Matsudaira Motoyasu are seasoned in battle, but they are a speck compared to master-sama. As long as I, Yamamoto Kansuke serves Japan's strongest master-sama, I will definitely use all of my strength to finish off the enemies in front of us!"

In such a short time, he entirely changed into another person. As expected from a strategist who can only be described as extraordinary. Kakujo thought as he looked at this new demon named Yamamoto Kansuke.

But much more terrifying was Takeda Shingen, who used even her god-sister to control the hearts of her retainers.

"Your expression is better now, Kansuke. It's a relief to have your skills in strategies and your spot-on divination . Before we head out, let's do a divination then!"

"Roger, but master-sama, my greatest skill in divination is astronomy; it's a skill to predict a person's fate using the trajectory of the stars."

"What a fellow, so full of fancy, convoluted words."

Kansuke took out a globe full of stars and spun it with a mysterious expression.

"Oh..."

After confirming his results, he laughed.

"....Hmmm, it's smooth sailing! Master-sama, the huge shining star at the west had fallen onto the ground, the enemy commander's life is going to end soon."

"Ohhh, just whose life is ending soon?"

"Oda Nobuna, or Saitou Dousan. Right now, in the sky , these two stars were shining brightly side by side, but this is against heaven's decree. At the same place and

time, there can only be one shining star. The other will definitely fall. If there is one truth in this world, that is it. The reason why they could co-exist for so long is because someone forcefully interfered with their fates and confused the future. The next time their fates cross again, one of them should fall."

"Ohh? How interesting. Just who can interfere and change their fate?" Shingen remarked, leaning closer.

"Just who is it, and how they are able to change fate, I do not know. This is the limit of astronomy divination."

"I see, if that's the case, it's necessary to use Sanada's subordinates."

"Sanada!?"

"Roger!"

"Someone that can change a human's fate is interesting , I must see him personally."

"Ahh, Master has an interest in that person?"

"That person is sent by heaven, he might be a greater rival than Uesugi Kenshin. I don't know why, but when I think of such a thing my chest rumbles."

A desire to fight with a strong enemy.

An enemy that can make her blood rush.

In Shingen's heart, a battle of the sengoku's strongest is the only method to decide who can unify the world.

The world, if I am really interested in it, will be a simple thing to get.

If I didn't know it would be easy, I wouldn't be so engrossed with Uesugi Kenshin and the battle of Kawanaka island, tossing Kyoto to the corners of my mind.

Seems like in Oda Nobuna's camp, there is someone that I have not met before, a destined rival.

If that's the case,

I've decided to go to Kyo.

At Seta, we shall raise Takeda Bishi, and then the Fuurinkazan flag.

Shingen, having made up her mind, called out " Kansuke! If Dousan and Oda Nobuna continue their alliance, what will happen?"

Yamamoto Kansuke laughed, and said confidently. "If those two keep defying the heavens and co-existing, there will definitely appear a new star to destroy both, and their stars will fall together."

"How pitiful, after she finally found a father-like figure in that Dousan. This might be that brat Oda Nobuna's fate."

Shingen, who had banished her own father for her ambitions, felt sympathy for Nobuna for an instant.

At the next instant, Shingen changed back to the sengoku's strongest demon lord.

"Kansuke! Summon Takeda's four generals! All Takeda troops, to Kyo! Let this battle surpass the battle of

Kawanaka island and become an extraordinary event!" Takeda Shingen declared, the premonition of meeting her destined enemy leaving her trembling with excitement.

And Kakujo, who was hiding in a corner of the tea room, thought, *Oda Nobuna and Takeda Shingen. These two heroes of the sengoku era will finally be battling with their all.* and shivered non-stop.

As fast as the wind.

As silent as a forest.

As daring as fire.

As immovable as a mountain

The Fuurinkazan[7] flag flapped with the wind.

The mountain started moving.

~Translator's Notice: For more info on updates, please visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/OdaNobunaLN.Eng/

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ ED- “Genji Monogatari”, the story of the son of a Heian era emporer who is made a commoner and * really* gets around with the ladies. Considered possibly the oldest classic novel ever. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tale_of_Genji
2. ↑ ED- Yoshikage then proceeds to fanboy out over Tales of Genji. All names and such can be found in the previous Tales of Genji reference wiki link or a google
3. ↑ Yoshimoto had been referring to herself as 妾, used to refer herself at a higher status.
4. ↑ Chin was used by Chinese emperors to refer to themselves. Chinese drama fanatics will know this as 朕(Zhèn).
5. ↑ Nobuna used the word, Atashi here, used commonly for girls to refer to themselves.
6. ↑ ED What indeed? Tonsure is the practice (mostly religious) of shaving off some hair right at the scalp. Think catholic monks, with just a ring of hair around a shiny scalp.
7. ↑ Fuurinkazan is 風, each word stands for wind, forest, fire, mountain respectively